



Br Philip

E. S. K.

1886. In Memoriam

NOTES
ON
COMMUNITY LIFE IN THE ORATORY.

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NOTES
ON
COMMUNITY LIFE
IN THE
ORATORY.

BY THE LATE
FREDERICK WILFRID FABER, D.D.

Colligite quæ superaverunt fragmenta, ne pereant.—

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PREFACE.

Although for those who have been contemporaries of the Author, no Preface is required to the collection of his Chapters and Retreats in the following pages, yet for the sake of others it seems desirable to place on record some of the reasons for thus treasuring up his words.

They are precious as the expression of his judgment on points of the Institute, formed upon most careful study of it, aided by his long experience as Novice-master, and remarkable knowledge of all branches of the spiritual life.

Further, he governed the Community during its first years of struggle and difficulty, and was the representative of St. Philip to it at the most critical period of its existence. Thus he directed, more than any one else, the formation of its spirit.

He held, moreover, towards this House a position in which he can have no successor. Wise and holy Superiors St. Philip will always give to his Congregation, but another Founder never. As upon him fell the chief burden of responsibility in the successive foundations of King William Street and Brompton, so to him were given by our Holy Father, it may be well believed, many special inspirations.

May his words be to the Community, which he loved so well, a constant source of devotion to St. Philip, and of fervour in the service of the Congregation!

J. E. B.

The Oratory, London.

Feb. 14, 1867.

CONTENTS.

PART I.

THE GENERAL CONGREGATION.

SECTION I.

CHAPTERS.

	YEAR.	PAGE
I. Why did I come here? <i>Feast of the Blessed Sebastian</i>	1849	3
II. Oratorianism	—	4
III. The Oratory	1852	4
IV. Our Cloister within	—	6
V. <i>Segregatus</i>	1862	7
VI. Sermons <i>Ash Wednesday</i>	1861	8
VII. The study of the Scriptures	—	9
VIII. The study of the lives of the Saints	—	11
IX. Selfishness a temptation of the Congregation	<i>Jan. 8</i> 1851	12
X. The danger of change	<i>Jan.</i> 1857	13
XI. What is kept from us	—	20
XII. Necessity of progress	1860	21
XIII. Habitual immortifications in little things	1856	24
XIV. Little inconveniences	<i>Jan.</i> 1862	26
XV. St. Philip's severity	<i>Dec.</i> 1858	27
XVI. After Holydays	1861	28
XVII. On Officials	<i>Oct.</i> 1862	30
XVIII. Month of Mary	<i>April</i> 1861	32
XIX. First Vespers of St. Philip	1854	34

SECTION II.

RETREATS.

	YEAR.	PAGE.
I. From Corpus Christi Retreat	1847	39
1. Indifference		39
2. Union with Jesus		41
3. Heroism in little things, No: 1.		43
" " No. 2.		45
4. On dissipation and low spirits		47
5. On the use of time and vocal prayer		49
II. From Retreat to Ordinaudi, Maryvale..	Sept. 1848	51
1. Our own vocation as Sons of St. Philip		51
2. Mary the model of Priests		52
3. Devotion to the Will of God		52
4. Going up to Jerusalem the model of Voca- tion		53
5. The call of the Apostles		54
6. The End of Man and the other Creatures		54
7. Generosity towards God...		56
III. Instructions to Ordinaudi, Sydenham.	August 1852	57
1. What we commit ourselves to in the Priest- hood		57
2. What is to sanctify Priests in England and in the Congregation		59
3. Office		60
4. Mass		61

PART II.

THE NOVICES.

SECTION I.

CHAPTERS.

	YEAR.	PAGE
I. The Novice Rule	—	65
II. Documents for the Novices	1852	67
III. Helps to perfection	—	76
IV. Oratorian life	—	78
V. Our vocation	—	79
VI. Community Spirit	1862	81
VII. Taking an interest in Divine things. Jan.	1862	83
VIII. To know nothing but Jesus Christ, and Him crucified	—	84
IX. <i>Sine me nihil potestis facere</i> ... Feb.	1862	85
X. Increase of devotion to our Lady Jan.	1862	86
XI. Love of our Lady	1858	88
XII. The Year Saint Dec. 28	1861	89
XIII. Fragment on St. Raphael ... Oct. 24	1848	90
XIV. Eve of All Saints	1861	93
XV. Getting up in the morning ... Feb.	1862	94
XVI. On the love of our own rooms	1848	95
XVII. On Intercessory Prayer	1848	105
XVIII. On formal Thanksgiving	1848	110
XIX. Necessity of study	1856	120
XX. Hearing Sermons	1861	122
XXI. Grace June 28	1862	123
XXII. Simplicity Jan.	1862	124
XXIII. <i>De Castitate</i>	1859	125
XXIV. Humility May	1862	127
XXV. Compunction April	1862	128
XXVI. Mortification May	1859	129
XXVII. Silence about others ... March 29	1862	130
XXVIII. Harmony in Community... Oct. 18	1861	131
XXIX. What we are to do with our unhappinesses in Community	1858	133

	YEAR.	PAGE
XXX. Coldness	<i>Jan.</i> 1862	134
XXXI. Beginning of Lent	... 1862	136
XXXII. The possibility of our being lost	<i>March</i> 1862	136
XXXIII. Anticipation of old age	<i>March</i> 1859	137

SECTION II.

RETREATS.

I. Carnival	1858	141
Instructions.		
1. Our own Vocation		141
2. Habits of Prayer		142
3. The necessity of mortification		143
4. Reading the lives of the Saints		145
5. The spirit of seriousness		147
6. Summary of the peculiarities and difficulties of the Oratorian life		149
Meditations.		
1. The particular Judgment		151
2. Our present state before God		152
3. The use of time		153
4. The jealousy of grace		154
5. The peace of God		155
6. The Majesty of God		156
Recommendation of the Retreat		158
II. Michaelmas	1861	159
Meditations.		
1. Except a man take up his Cross daily		159
2. The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence... ..		159
3. Except you become as little children		160
4. All else in comparison of Jesus Christ		160
5. Greatness of past sins		161
6. Our own view of our past sins		161
7. God's view of them		161
8. Future judgment and punishment of them		162
9. Wonders at present mercy		163

CONTENTS.

xi

	YEAR.	PAGE
10. Littleness of past penance		163
11. Littleness of improvement		164
12. Littleness of prayer		165
13. Meannesses of character		166
14. Wonder at God's patience		167
15. Wonder at the patience and forbearance of our Brothers with us		168
16. The future, what is it to be like?.. ..		169
17. The three things required		169
18. The greatness and certainty of grace		170
19. Personal love of Jesus Christ		171
Considerations.		
1. Delusions and Examen of conscience		172
2. Humility		172
3. Fraternal charity must depend on esteem		173
4. Fraternal charity		174
5. Government of the tongue		175
6. Interior spirit of observance		177
7. Courage		178
8. Necessity of for ever beginning anew		179

PART III.

THE LAY BROTHERS.

I. Brother Stanislas	1848	183
II. Retreat before the Assumption, Maryvale	1848	184
1. Object of the Retreat		184
2. Instruction. The presence of God		185
3. On our own nothingness		186
4. On the greatness of God		187
5. Instruction. Union with God the end of the soul		187
6. On God's anxiety to gain our souls		188
7. Instruction. Awfulness of sin		189
8. On Infidelities to God in little things		189
9. The Crucifixion		190

	YEAR.	PAGE
10. Instruction. Ejaculatory prayer as the first means of union		190
11. The three consents of Our Blessed Lady ..		191
12. Instruction. Sanctification of ordinary actions the second means of union ..		192
13 Her life in the house of St. John a model of ours		193
14. Loving prospect of death		193
15. Instruction. Bodily mortification the third means of union		194
16. Her Assumption, taking our hearts with her		195
III. From Retreat at St. Wilfrid's	1849	196
1. The Twenty Questions		196
2. Instruction. Particular difficulties of Oratorian Lay Brothers		197
3. Oratorian humility		198
4. Mortification		200
5. Quietness of manner		201
6. Devotion to St. Philip		202
7. Instruction. How to love each other, and help each other on		204

ERRATA.

Page 8, line 15, for "would have done" read "would have it done."

Page 51, last line but 7, for "reality" read "unreality."

Page 70, line 6, for "duty" read "study."

Page 71, last line, for "that you would" read "you should."

Page 77, last line, for "spend an extasy" read "spend an hour in extasy."

Page 120, line 12, for "especialy" read "especial."

PART FIRST.
THE GENERAL CONGREGATION.



SECTION I.
CHAPTERS.

I.

WHY DID I COME HERE ?

Not to spend an easy life, not to have pleasant companions, congenial duties, or a home without temptations. All these things I turned my back upon, when I turned my back upon the world. I came here that I might love God fervently, and nothing but God—to rehearse now what I hope will be my blessed occupation for all eternity—to learn to mortify myself by continual mortifications and incessant prayer—to sanctify myself first of all, and then to try to save souls for Jesus.

May the grace of God preserve me from

A comfort-loving life,

An unrestrained tongue,

A dissipated mind,

An unexamined conscience,

Slothful prayers,

Slovenly Sacraments,

An esteem of myself, and

A love of anything short of God. Amen.

Viva Gesù, Giuseppe, Maria, e Filippo !

II.

ORATORIANISM.

Peculiar Institute.

Perfection of Religion without its vows.

Its perfection in having no vows.

Its principle—mortification of will and understanding.

Its strength—blind obedience to superiors.

Its characteristic—intense affection to Rule.

History of Rule.

Its method of training—knocking away all outer support, leaving us to live on grace day by day with no rule to fall back on, so that we have always to be giving way, and giving up, and knocking under.

Its happiness—Loving feeling of *nest*, or home.

Its temptation—Want of stability.

Its safeguard—Perseverance.

What are we to begin by doing?



III.

THE ORATORY.

Do we look for our perfection in anything else but the work of the Congregation?—e.g.

1. In the number, or nature, or sort of our penitents.
2. In external works.
3. In certain practices, &c. which are not community.

If so, we shall never reach perfection : we are only *per accidens* living together ; the spirit of the Oratory is jealous, like that of the Visitation.

How Fathers may fail in this, having personal pursuits and hobbies, or attachment to favourite works.

Our sanctification is in common things, because St. Philip wants purity of heart : and also it must be a great deal in mere sacerdotal acts, office, mass, preaching, confessing—as we are seculars : he wished to renew the spirit in which Jesus founded the secular clergy.

Our perfection is in community.

1. It is not enough to *think* of God : this doesn't make purity of intention sufficient for perfection. See Surin's third letter to P. Frison.
2. There is a kind of sacerdotal habit of thinking about God, which may become mere formality.
3. Our hearts must be hourly forced up to God.

Take the case of a man regular in confessional, pulpit, oratory, &c.—in official work, &c. : why is he not good ?—Prayer comes first of the three works ; the other two won't act without it.

Community requires heroism—

1. Never to speak of Congregation matters, or to criticise superiors.
2. To bully our judgment when it rises up against obedience: outward obedience is not enough.
3. Never to talk of each other amongst ourselves.
4. To force oneself into harmony with Community.
5. Not only not to complain of things, e.g. preaching turns, but to love such things, as all honest Christians should love means of grace which God stoops to direct to *themselves*.
6. Not only to be silent about but to love and look out for inconveniences of poverty—as St. Philip yearned for them.
7. Not to lose ground by having time broken in upon.

It is not even easy never to feel contempt for other members.

IV.

OUR CLOISTER WITHIN.

A cloister trampled and invaded is a picture of our life. Hence our cloister must be within.

This can only be by recollection, which

1. Guards us against the effects of work, and enables us to do much work.
2. Keeps up unction in our intercourse with others.

3. Nourishes supernatural principles.
4. Enables us to lose no time; and this is one of the chief things in Oratorian perfection.

Our perfection is that of *priests*: hence we must have an ecclesiastical spirit.

Things which hinder our recollection, and also hinder the ecclesiastical spirit, are

1. Visits of courtesy and acquaintanceships.
2. News of the day.
3. Secular studies.
4. Talks in our rooms.
5. Talking of our work.

Much depends on atmosphere; if we say we need these things for recreations, no general rule can be laid down—but St. Philip's maxim about recreation out of Jesus must be our aim.

V.

SEGREGATUS.

- I. From all worldliness: each one of us has some deceit of this kind not wrong in itself: it may be—
 1. Newspapers — 2. worldly talk — 3. seeing women — 4. chattering with externs — 5. going to worldly sights, amusements, or parts of the town — 6. shopping — 7. eating.
- II. From relations and friends—making no calls

of mere civility, except where high rank requires it.

III. From personal things.

Multum facit qui multum diligit.

Multum facit, qui rem bene facit.

Bene facit qui communitati magis quam suæ voluntati facit.



VI.

SERMONS.

1. It is an obvious duty to take pains with what is the chief grace of our vocation.
 2. Do we regard it as one of the primary means of saving our own souls?
 3. Do we take pains to do it as our own stern exacting Saint would have done?
- I. Faults in extempore preaching.
1. Overweening conceit of our own talents.
 2. Idleness, irreverence to God's word and doctrine—irreverent trust in His inspirations.
 3. Disrespect and want of painstaking love to our audiences.
 4. It is unsatisfactory to look back upon, because we don't know what we have said. And we can give no account to people afterwards—nor lend the sermons.
- II. Requisites.
1. Remote preparation in congruous study, in

habits, in prayer, in avoiding excitement and curiosity about news.

2. Proximate preparation : great pains—not putting off to the last.
3. Actual prayer.
4. Renewal of the grace of our ordination so as to awake zeal for souls.
5. Great simplicity: strike out striking thoughts: eschew figures: quote much scripture: seek examples of the saints.
6. Avoid contempt of your hearers.
7. Cultivate an ardent personal love of our most Blessed Lord by a continual study of Him in His Three Years' Ministry: this, to an apostle, is almost of more importance than Bethlehem or Calvary.



VII.

THE STUDY OF THE SCRIPTURES.

Priests have little time—but some portion of that little ought daily to be given to the reading of the scriptures

1. As a means of sanctification.
 2. As a power in their ministry.
- I. Natural relationship between a priest and Holy Scripture. We almost promise it to God in the daily recitation of the 118th psalm.
 - II. Close relation to God into which it draws him,

contemplating God's ways, brooding over God's own words.

- III. It somehow leads to a great spirit of prayer and facility in prayer : and practice of ejaculatory prayer.
- IV. Its depth, strikingness and fragmentary character especially suited to those who have not much time for reading or for continuous thought.
- V. It is itself an act of religion, and so brings graces ;
 1. Fullness in preaching, and the mysterious power that texts seem to have on people's souls.
 2. Mysteries of Jesus and Mary—their theology is unpreachable except in the shape of comment on Scripture.
 3. Power in conversation, especially in consoling the afflicted.
 4. Great amount of spiritual direction, which it prevents from becoming human.
 5. In controversy and conversion, it is a most needful implement.

A priest's holiness depends on the spirit of Jesus—this is not easily definable, but is got by long, minute, affectionate study of

1. Gospels.
2. St. Paul's Epistles.

St. Gregory says, *Discedite a me maligni, et scrutabor mandata Dei mei.*

VIII.

STUDY OF THE LIVES OF THE SAINTS.

The *residuum* of the study of the lives of the Saints is a wish for familiarity with God.

This seems the end of their great graces and extraordinary gifts.

What it is;—

An approach to heaven.

A disenchantment of created things.

A realising of divine things.

A grand equability.

An increasing languishing desire, and nausea of life.

How to get it;—by

Habits of prayer.

Spiritual reading.

Application of the mind to God.

No light or miscellaneous reading.

Ejaculations.

Some trifling but habitual bodily penance.

A serious spirit: not being given to levity or much recreation.

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IX.

SELFISHNESS A TEMPTATION OF THE
CONGREGATION.

The misery of having to be cautious even when doing well—so, striving to get the habit of prayer, we have need to be wary about selfishness.

I. Selfishness under any circumstances is a temptation of the Congregation.

1. It is not an order.
2. Practical seclusion, and jealousy of our institute.
3. Narrowness from not mixing with the world, yet not being supernaturally out of the world.
4. Uninterruptedness of each Father's work.

II. Ourselves in particular.

1. No external works compatible with fundamentals of institute.
2. No hospitals.
3. Not in Rome.
4. Not yet in relation with religious or seculars; caution against too great familiarity a proof of *much* familiarity.
5. Youth, and hence being addicted to our own work and our own views: how much there is of this amongst us all!

III. What to do.

1. Intercessory prayer.

2. Not look so much at things as *λειτουργίαι*.
 3. Not aim at moving in an orbit of our own, in work or anything else.
 4. Not chafe at want of definition about spheres of officers, &c.
 5. Love of souls, as an instinct, is wanting among us.
 6. Our want of interest in each other's wor
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X.

THE DANGER OF CHANGE.

My dear Fathers and Brothers, I am unwilling to let the new year begin without pointing out to you a danger which seems to me to threaten the community. What I have to say concerns every one, and while it will necessarily imply blame (and blame must always rest unequally on a *number* of men) I am not intending to blame one more than another, or to except myself from the general condemnation. But I wish you to understand that I mean to speak as superior, with all the force which my office has any right to claim, and out of a mature conviction that I am communicating St. Philip's will.

The danger which appears to me to threaten the community is the spirit of change, which I perceive is fast growing up among us, and taking possession of every department of the Congrega-

tion's life. We seem to have no idea of improvement, except in change; when we see slackness or remissness, or inertness, or imperfection any where, our first thought is change. It appears to be voted slow and useless work to do far better and more carefully and more energetically what has been done before. No! we must do something else, something new. Thus it comes to pass that although we have been seven years in London, and three in this house, we seem to have no stability within ourselves. We have no precedents which anybody respects, no usages which we are not ready to sacrifice to a view. Our life is a tiresome series of uninteresting and irritating revolutions. Not all these years are to be supposed to have got us out of the age of experiments; and while we have given a model to others which has made a most deep impression, we are always itching to pull it to pieces to try and make it better. There is no peace, no repose, no permanence, no almost immovable horror of change, in all which things alone I can recognise any lasting or successful *go*, or any true portrait of the spirit of St. Philip.

Hence it has come to pass out of this universal fever, and it has come to pass by imperceptible degrees, that both in what is domestic, and in what concerns the aspect we present to the world, the community cannot be said to have any action at all. Everything is the work of a small and fluctuating body of officers, or of one officer and his friends, and then of another officer and his

friends, and it is only because these officers are fluctuating that the really private and individual character of the work is lost sight of, and veiled from our observation. The assembled Congregation treats the proposals and money questions of its officers in a manner which is often not in accordance with the sweetness of charity, and as if the officers were saving money for their own private purposes, and not for the community itself, while, on the other hand, the officers are too often regardless of the mind, and sense, and wishes of a body whose limbs they simply are. They have no feeling of being their servants. They regard their offices as so many capabilities of carrying out views of their own. They do not doubt that their views are for the good of the community, and in their estimation the community is a great child to whom it would be a simple unkindness to let him have his own way. Thus the offices come to be a tyranny under which the community suffers murmuringly and uneasily, and which overwhelms and swamps the office of the superior. I am not concerned to enquire how the blame is to be parcelled out between the community which appears to regard its officers as aliens, or the officers who seem to regard the community as a body to whom they are to give a rule, not from whom they are to receive a rule. I cannot easily persuade myself that the community is ever wrong; still less that when it is at variance with any one of its members, that member is otherwise than exclusively wrong.

The result of it all is this, that precedents are disregarded; that in our offices we are always knocking down the work of our predecessors, and not seldom get tired and out of heart before we build it up again. It is no probability that a thing will be done tomorrow, because it has been done today. So far from it, that we may be almost sure of a change. We can get used to nothing, attached to nothing. It is like having workmen perpetually in one's house, hammering, and daubing, and plastering, and painting, all noise, and dirt, and disorder, and confusion. O the unbearable weariness of all this, if we have to be aiming at a supernatural life the while, with perpetual noise when we long for silence, dirt instead of cleanliness, exceptions instead of rules, and a wild, swift, crude, half matured, and expensive series of experiments for our sole repose!

Let me say a word on principles. It seems to me to follow logically from the fact that our institute is based on perseverance as its characteristic virtue, on prayer as its life, on charity as its bond, that it is an institute in which change is, intrinsically and without any reference to its merits, an evil to be opposed, or a necessity to be admitted only after long and jealous examination. If a custom has got possession, no matter on what slight grounds, a change must be very much better not to be a loss in a house like ours. Nay, I think that any change ought not only to show its own vast superiority over the old state of things, but also some positive disadvantage in the old

state of things, before we give way to it. Our institute depends for its inward life on perseverance, prayer, and love, three things all of which, to say the least, are endangered by change, and one of which, perseverance is simply opposed to it. In its outward life the institute depends on what we call *go*—and *go* comes first of cheerfulness, next of united action, next of perseverance, next of prudence, next of boldness, and to all these things exciting, unnerving, wearisome, disappointing, uncertain, insecure change is directly opposed. Who can be cheerful in such a life as ours, when change is known to be lying hid for us, under the matting and behind the doors, from the Oratory to the Church, from the library to the refectory, from the recreation room to the corridors? Those who are young and well may enjoy this sort of thing for a time, but even they will tire of it at last, but to those who are older, and ailing, and responsible, what can it be but simple nausea? Yet this is just the giddy state of things to which a spirit of venturous and experimental change may soon bring one of St. Philip's un vowed houses.

You will not expect me to give you instances of my meaning: for I should then seem to be singling out departments for a greater share of blame than I really feel in my own mind is due to them. Neither do I wish to speak of this spirit of change as morally wrong. It may of course come from the fidgets of our souls when we do not pray much, from the natural fickleness of our minds

when they are deficient in supernatural principles, or from the fussy desire to be stirring which, we all know, is the usual alternation of idleness and irregularity, but for the most part I look upon it simply as part of our *youngness*, part of the price we have to pay for the energy and absence of human respect, which our youth has given us in aid of grace. As young we are inexperienced: we take shallow views of human nature: we lack breadth of mind: we are impatient of deliberation: we do not do justice to the niceties on which peace and charity and the existence of spiritual habits depend: we have not lived years enough to discern how little *consistent* and *persistent* we are in our fits and starts; and finally small things come before our minds in an exaggerated way, because we have so few terms of comparison in our thoughts by which to rectify the magnifications of self love. But we must not the less be on our guard against a fault, because it is in itself not very blameable and altogether natural.

To sum up what I have said, I object greatly to changes in our congregation:—

1. As leading to excitement, which is the death of perseverance, and the fatal caricature of real *go*.
2. As tending to great expense: for the annual sums are enormous, which a little official mortification, which is surely even a greater duty than personal mortification, might have spared us.
3. As leading to criticism, and so to *cliquerie*

and to informal settlements of questions which have not the blessing which rests on the solemn procedures of the assembled congregation.

4. As destructive of the spirit of prayer, as every one must have felt within himself.
5. As destroying that feeling of home, which belongs to our vocation. I cannot say how strongly I feel this. We have little customs in our congregation which have outlived 300 years, little things which might as well have been done some other way as the way in which they are done, so intrinsically indifferent are they: but St. Philip and the first fathers did them one way, and so to us another way is sacrilegious novelty. Now are we to have no such things of our own? Is all to be flux which is not downright rule? It is like living in a house with hired furniture perpetually changing. We grow weary: we are cut off by our vocation from all human loves, and we cling to our little ways, to our domestic usages, to our accustomed ornaments, to our local peculiarities. We twine our hearts round them. Like the *notos vultus* of the Fathers, they are our familiarities, our household gods, and when they are yearly or triennially burnt or cast into the lumber room, we grow weary, and sore of heart, and out of heart. We have no home: St. Philip's house is only a lodging, and we grow selfish perforce, because we cannot keep ourselves

spiritual in all this modern racket of change, unless we shut ourselves up, and care not for the changes or those who make them, or the work in which they are made, but selfishly immerse ourselves in our own line of work, or our literary pursuits, or in the rest of our own rooms, or in the independent tranquillity of private piety.

Ten years more of these little revolutions of which we have now had seven years, and I fear we shall be found at the end sick of our work, heartily sick of each other, and lucky if we are not sick of St. Philip also.

XI.

WHAT IS KEPT FROM US.

- I. In our beginnings and our littleness what is kept from us is no small help to heaven.
 - 1. It keeps away temptations,
 - 2. And distractions.
 - 3. It is a help to unworldliness,
 - 4. To charity,
 - 5. And to humility.
- II. What to avoid.
 - 1. Don't want to know news.
 - 2. Don't want to know about persons.
 - 3. Don't read light books.
 - 4. Don't look about in the streets.

5. Don't want to make talk at recreation.

III. Perseverance in vocation.

1. Keep shut up in the Passion.
2. Keep *soaked* in lives of Saints.
3. Always be making acts of contrition.
4. Seeking in all things reasons for acts of love of God and of thanksgiving.
5. And for doing kind acts to your brothers.



XII.

NECESSITY OF PROGRESS.

Egli è un gran cattivo segno, quel non profittare sempre più. St. Teresa.

Nearly all the saints have some characteristic maxim; one of St. Teresa's was that if we were going on upon one level, in one successive quiet sameness, we were not leading a really inward life. Let us consider this.

I. An inward life therefore requires :—

1. Sensible vicissitudes.
2. Together with changeable operations of grace.
3. And notable infidelities on our part, the more notable and the more noted the holier we grow ;
4. Which cannot help but attract our notice;
5. And upon the feeling and observation of which our inward life is mostly based, as

well as the shape and manner of our daily communications with God.

II. Community life from this point of view.

1. It naturally inclines to formalism: we trust the exterior to do the work of the interior.
2. Regularity has a tendency to make the conscience inattentive.
3. A sort of easy-going self indulgence is apt to come of privacy.
4. There is a tranquillity in *our* manner of life which may miss of being a tranquillity in God. Unsuspecting delusion is easy in *our* life.
5. Hence we get into a groove, and a spiritual life with no phenomena, no fluctuations, no awakenings, no disgraces. I apprehend it is against this very sort of thing that St. Teresa means to witness.

III. Remedies for this.

1. There are some things in the spiritual life, the knowledge of which is half the cure: this is one.
2. Much reading of the lives of the Saints is a help.
3. Eschewing secular studies, tastes, and pursuits. The more we come to learn the Oratory the more we must see that its perfection is in the ecclesiastical spirit. St. Teresa (maxim 96.) says, "Until we have attained a great love of God, we must walk with much thought at all times, and keep apart from all things, occa-

sions, and companies which do not positively lay us more alongside of God."

4. All self-knowledge : hence particular examen : why is the devil always breaking this little habit ? Because there is such an omnipotence in it against him. I would suggest examen about what we have done for others—one can't live with twenty men without *daily* opportunities of unselfishness.
5. Our monthly day of retreat. A way of spending it is to occupy it with much examen of conscience, and such prayer as that leads to, instead of merely increasing the number of our meditations. St. Teresa says (maxim 578.) "A day of humble self-knowledge, though it may cost effort and pain, is a greater grace from our Lord than many days of prayer." But we ought to aim at such inward familiarity with our Lord as to experience what she says in another maxim, (560.) "In the matter of self-knowledge one single word of inward reprehension from our Lord does more than we ourselves can do in many days of meditation on our own miseries." May St. Philip grant to us never to be long without these inward reproaches—for to be without them is either to be deluded in our spiritual life, or what is worse, to have no spiritual life at all.

XIII.

HABITUAL IMMORTIFICATION IN LITTLE THINGS.

Without being luxurious or expensive, this is quite possible; and from the freedom of our secret lives in the congregation, it is a likely temptation of the Oratory.

I. In our rooms and private habits.

1. If we feel a want, we supply it—or find a substitute for it.
2. Thus we put away little inconveniences sedulously.
3. And amass property and attachments almost without realising what we are doing.

II. In our way of doing our duties.

1. At times which suit us best, even at the expense of punctuality.
2. Facility of dispensing ourselves arising out of this.
3. We have no rule, and no captivity—hence on many days no daily cross.

All this may not be wrong in itself in detail, but the upshot is that our will is our rule.

III. In our time.

1. St. Philip has not a definite quantity of work for us to do, in as it were office hours: but we belong to him.
2. Light reading, or miscellaneous reading, or

accomplishments, without distinct view to some definite glory of God, or of St. Philip.

3. Hence comes

1. An unecclesiastical spirit.
2. Dry preaching without unction.
3. Uncommunity spirit—we get left alone and forfeit, and rightly forfeit the affections of our brothers.
4. Want of unselfishness.
5. Gradual abandonment of prayer, which is our special vocation.
6. Miscellaneous unecclesiastical study is the bane of religious houses: the literary spirit is quite incompatible with zeal for souls.

The remedy is to consider that we are always, and everywhere, and in all relations, the absolute property of St. Philip.

I have said this, not as a general exhortation or admonition of a spiritual matter, but because I think we are failing in all these three points, and are offending St. Philip thereby; and at a season when unworldly thoughts cannot help but be less prominent, I have a right to ask of each of you to consider before St. Philip what I have said.

XIV.

LITTLE INCONVENIENCES.

A Father gave a chapter some years ago on the removal of little inconveniences ; I will speak of the same things now.

I. The evil.

1. The least bore to be removed, and at once.
2. Frequency, pettiness, and unworthiness of complaints.
3. Repugnance and chafing under even a *look* of authority.
4. This to an extent we do not find in those who live in the world.
5. It seems to me greatly on the increase; we become more like old bachelors, and less like religious.

II. What is implied in the evil ?

1. We came here not to be comfortable, but to be mortified.
2. This little ungodliness is a revelation to us of our interior state.
3. How much of our spirituality must be un-solid and delusive ?
4. Above all, what growth of selfishness it implies ?
5. And a less looking to St. Philip and his example, and to those lives which we ought to look at not as literature, but as a

sort of Bible, read and thought on constantly.

III. Virtues injured by this.

1. Obedience—not recognising St. Philip in all the offices.
2. Charity—in many ways naturally hurt by this.
3. Poverty—such a Philip-like virtue.
4. Mortification—obviously offended by it.
5. Silence—silent bearing of things, how much of an interior life is already attained by this.



XV.

ST. PHILIP'S SEVERITY.

No length of years, no reality of vocation preserves us, if we become *slack* in *his* congregation.

He is the austere of all saints in the house : just as moral theologians are strict themselves, and lax to others—so we teach St. Philip's sunniness, but may not use it for ourselves.

We, here and now, may chiefly show our devotion to him by

- I. Remembering that prayer is our characteristic as Oratorians.
 1. It is the object of our union.
 2. No one word expresses St. Philip more completely than meditation.
 3. Second decree about it—*maxime adhibendum*—the confessor is told to urge it.
 4. We should stretch a point to be at the evening Oratory.

5. Avoid such studies and pastimes as are uncongenial to the spirit of prayer. The whole life of a man of prayer is a remote preparation for meditation.
- II. Keeping very strictly to the rule about three confessions a week.
1. What is said by the dying of the hidden treasures of the Philippine life.
 2. Oratorian sanctification lies mostly in common ecclesiastical things.
 3. All that is implied in a good and prepared confession.
 4. Considerable mortification in it, and many indirect spiritual goods.
 5. I don't suppose any one ever left the congregation, or went very seriously wrong in it, who went his three times to confession.

XVI.

AFTER HOLYDAYS.

Have we been during the past year what St. Philip would have had us be?

I. In what have we failed?

1. In the chief thing of our vocation, viz., prayer.
2. In observance, because of external works.
3. Several of us in the worship of health, which yearly grows more and more our characteristic evil.

4. In government of the tongue, and so in humility and charity, the two bases of the congregation.
 5. I think there has been some decay of community spirit, because of interest in external works.
- II. However—how, by St. Philip's help, do we find ourselves now ?
1. In temporals—in a somewhat better condition than in other years, through economy.
 2. In charity and harmony together.
 3. In agreement, quite free, about devotion to the Pope and the Church.
 4. Our external works are a success.
 5. I trust there is great and vigorous grace in individuals.
- III. What shall we do this year ?
1. As we grow older in the congregation, two dispositions should grow.
 1. More dissatisfaction with self.
 2. More enthusiasm to be holy.
 2. State of things.
 1. Troubles of the Church.
 2. Distressing prospects of the poor.
 3. What shall we do ?
 1. Increase of personal holiness our only help to the Church and Pope.
 2. Intercessory prayer increased.
 3. Minutest observance, in reparation of the lawlessness of the world which is offending God.

4. Curbing of personal expenses for alms—coming famine.
 5. I would suggest taking for the year's grace *humility*, as meeting the wants of the Church, so as to appease God, the wants of the Congregation, so as to secure our success, and of our own souls, so as to get charity, government of the tongue, and community feeling, which exaggeration of offices and works is impairing.
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XVII.

ON OFFICIALS.

Beginning of Triennium, 1862.

In all human things decay comes, and just as much or more in spirituals: hence tepidity is a continual tendency even in fervent communities.

- I. The principal causes of lukewarmness in communities are
 1. Increase in personal comforts, and in our case where there is no vow of poverty, expenses.
 2. Increased interest in food—middle life is always edging to this.
 3. Increased mixing with externs.
 4. Light reading, newspapers, and uneccelesiastical studies, of which it is the characteristic that the longer we continue them, the less

we feel their danger, unless by a special grace.

5. Increased freedom of tongue.
6. But the one I want to dwell on is getting relaxed in the sense of being under obedience. Here must be our first step in getting out of lukewarmness, if we feel ourselves slipping into it. Hence I will say a few words on the conduct of officials and to officials.

II. The conduct of officials ought to help to secure this sense of obedience.

1. Axiom—the chief and primary duty of every officer is to *please*. He is set to serve and not to rule.
2. Duty of keeping traditions, and not irritating by changes not well pondered; a *little* improvement is never desirable, because change is in itself such a great disimprovement.
3. Urbanity of manner: form is often more than substance in government.
4. Carefulness of language, considering the wellknown temper of each.
5. Thinking beforehand of every one, so as to exact the minimum: this was the special spirit of St. Philip.

III. Our behaviour to officials.

1. Not obeying, throwing it on them to defend their rules: so base a selfishness is this that I need not dwell on it to you.
2. Obeying with a murmur, or a visible ungracefulness; discourtesy is a great sin in community, yet a peculiarly easy one.

3. Criticising which does harm to others as well as self, and injures the whole community as well as the officer.
4. Making suggestions to officers;—this is a common unthoughtfulness of those who do not understand human nature, and so can hardly credit its importance: nothing so disturbs charity; it is as if nobody but ourselves would think of anything; it is better that little evils should happen, nay, that even great forgetfulness should come, than this uncourteous officiousness.
5. Asking for reasons;—demerit of this; the weariness of it to officers: the uselessness of it to those not responsible; it is a peculiar opposition to obedience, to community spirit, and to the religious spirit altogether.

See what it all comes to. St. Philip's one rule would, almost of itself, give peace and union in Community—

“Noningere teipsum in rebus non pertinentibus ad te.”

XVIII.

MONTH OF MARY.

When we came into the Congregation, we had more or less distinct views about our sanctification.

At least we intended all our time, toil, talents, to be for God. How has it been? How far short we have fallen!

1. It is well to think of old fervours, and to see *how far*?
2. And then to see in what respects more particularly.
3. Most probably in humility and in charity—the two foundations of the Congregation.
4. Then to see *why* we have failed?
5. Different reasons for each of us: but all traceable to one—insufficient habits of prayer.
6. But do we contentedly abandon our old hopes? If not, let us try with our Blessed Lady to take the occasion of her month to recover ourselves, and to change.
7. For time is passing—and it is a time, about which those who come after us will wonder how our life was spent, as founders unendowed, and when the Church and her Head were in such distress: nay, they will perhaps envy us the very startlingness of our calls to perfection.
8. But is every one in the Congregation called to perfection? Would St. Philip have admitted any one who said beforehand that he believed he was only called to lead an ordinarily pious life? I wish we were less at ease about ourselves, less contented with ourselves, less humble with a pusillanimous humility, and more humble with that humility

of the saints which is so like courage that it looks to us more like courage than humility.

Let us keep our own Month of Mary in the secret life of our own hearts, with this protestation to our Blessed Lord from the Cantic: I will take hold of Thee, and bring Thee into my Mother's house: there Thou shalt teach me, and I will give Thee a cup of spiced wine, and new wine of my pomegranates.*

XIX.

FIRST VESPERS OF ST. PHILIP.

The feast mingling with Ascension Day—the feast at Rome, of its apostle—his old familiar haunts—we too keep it in this distant city—but heavenly-mindedness is a flower of all lands and climes.

I. St. Philip in Rome.

1. The quietness and unvaried incident of his daily life.
2. The hiddenness and secrecy of it all: commonness of his external aspect.
3. Yet it was full of miracles and wonderful communications with God.
4. His extraordinary attractiveness.
5. He lived like a beating heart in the great

* Cant. viii. 2.

city; and died as if passing from one room to another.

II. St. Philip's grace: it was heavenly-mindedness: and how he attained it.

1. He was everybody's friend, and loved all, and helped all plans for good: so has his Congregation been befriended.
2. He was all for God, and did each thing for God as it came to hand, quietly and with a smile.
3. His intimate life all for the Blessed Sacrament.
4. His sweetness and equability to all who came across him.
5. He never allowed anything of the world to share his affections.

His was a beautiful mind—full of bright things and fair pictures—the zeal of an apostle in the repose of a hermit—action and contemplation wonderfully balanced.

Oh for us who love yet fear him, who are with him all the day long, what a day is this! It is a foretaste of that eternal holyday when he will collect his sons around him in heaven to do some special will of Him whose creatures they are. They will keep through endless ages, as if it were the character of some sacrament, the sign, and seal, and spirit which he has marked upon them.

PART FIRST.
THE GENERAL CONGREGATION.

SECTION II.
RETREATS.

I.

FROM CORPUS CHRISTI RETREAT.

Under the Invocation of St. Joseph and St. John the Evangelist.

1.

INDIFFERENCE.

It is useless to attempt to acquire purity of intention without dying to self.

Death to self therefore will be the subject of our meditation.

Holy Indifference is death to self.

The practice of Holy Indifference is impossible except through obedience, and obedience in detail.

Composition of Place.—All things, occupations, &c., are indifferent, but, when holy obedience touches them, an angel stamps them with *Voluntas Dei*, and this seal is their only value.

Point 1.—Indifference is one continued act of the most pure and sublime faith: creatures fade away, like a mist on the wood in the morning, and everywhere is God and His sweet Will.

Point 2.—Indifference must specially be exercised:

1. in employments: 2. in conveniences: 3. in bad opinion of others.

Point 3.—It must be: 1. in *heart*, (not allowing

repugnance or propension the slightest swing :) 2. in *will* (by mastering repugnance, and keeping down imagination which will picture other things :) 3. in *understanding* (the most difficult to all ;) pray for a hatred of your own opinion in everything : there can be no true sacrifice to God without the death of the understanding ; an order of holy obedience must act upon you as the words of consecration at mass act upon the host.

Picture of the man who is not indifferent.

1. He argues openly or in himself, and criticises, and fosters an attachment to the opposite of what obedience commands him.
2. He is impatient and disquieted about obediences which may be given him, and forms unholy wishes that they may not be laid upon him.
3. He is always bating and bargaining with obedience—doing the least he can—drawing fine, and to his soul fatal distinctions between obligation and counsel—managing to shift and shoulder his cross as comfortably as he can—full of self-indulgence and delicacy, and so burdensome both to others and himself.
4. He always sees the creature in his Superior or director, and in all obediences, so he is sometimes full of base stratagems, at others of secret murmurs and partialities, and even of open insolence, criticising the talents, or the

good temper, or the practical wisdom of his Superior.

5. He is continually worshipping his own opinion and ideas, and so criticising others, and making himself general censor of the Community; and thus he loses the love of all.
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2.

UNION WITH JESUS.

The end of man is life, not death; it is death in order to live: the destruction of the old life in order to the bringing in of a better life.

Holy Indifference is a death to self in order to Union with Jesus.

Union with Jesus can only be built upon the total ruin of all our own interior tastes, lights, and consolations, which must be burnt up before Him in the fire of grace and trial to make sweet incense before Him.

How fearful it would be to think of the Sacred Humanity of Jesus ever being separated from the Eternal Word:—fearful also for us ever to be separated from Him. As in the Incarnation the two natures were so united as to be inseparable, and yet unconfused, so must we be joined with Him; and to effect this joining is the great end of that prodigious daily miracle of Transubstantiation.

Composition of Place. Worship of the Sacred Humanity by the hierarchies of heaven.

Point 1.—The life of the blessed is the life of Jesus in them: 1. they act by Him, *per quem majestatem tuam laudant angeli, adorant dominationes, tremunt potestates*: 2. they see by Him and in His light, as crystals hung up in the sun, multiplying *Jesuses*; so grace multiplies them upon earth: 3. they appropriate His perfections and splendours to crown themselves with: *tecum principium in die virtutis tue in splendoribus sanctorum*.

Point 2.—This union was the end of His Body, with its sufferings, wounds, bloodsheddings, infancy, weariness; of His Heart, with its distress, bitterness, unreturned love; of His Soul, with its fears, sadness, agonies.

All three a theatre of temptations, to deliver our bodies from sensuality, our hearts from attachment to creatures, our souls from false lights and evil inclinations.

Point 3.—Each movement of grace, specially Holy Communion, goes towards the destruction of selfwill, selflove, and selftrust.

Point 4.—To do His Father's Will is the end of His Sacred Humanity, carried on now in us, in our struggles, our suffering, and our obedience, as victims and brothers of the sweet Will of God. So He clothes Himself with our sufferings and crosses, offers Himself over again, multiplies Himself as a victim in

giving us the graces of victims. So He extends His three-and-thirty years of work of glorifying His Father upon earth.

3.

HEROISM IN LITTLE THINGS.

1.

If venial sins hinder the perfection of our union with Christ, little fidelities are precisely the things which rivet it more closely: they are a ladder of perfection: a slow martyrdom of love.

Little things are the true field of Christian heroism:

1. Because they merit more glory for us.

2. Because they give more glory to God.

I. They merit more glory for us:—

Composition of Place: Jesus as a boy, working in St. Joseph's shop, or fetching water from the well for Mary.

Point 1.—Conversion of souls, works of mercy, visiting prisons, preaching, hearing confessions, establishing religious institutes, are things comparatively easy when put by the side of exactitude in daily duties, observation of petty rules, minute custody of the senses, subdued voice, chaste and kind words, bodily postures, preaching the Presence of God: there is far more glory for us in the little

things : 1. because more fortitude is required, because they are continuous, uninterrupted, and there is no dignity about them to spur us on ; 2. because all the strength required must be sought in the interior : we have no outward place, notice of men, or praise to rest our lever on ; 3. because in little things it is more a matter of endurance than of action, a perpetual constraint.

Point 2.—Our enemies are more effectually led captive in little things : 1. because the defeats are more frequent ; 2. the very continuity forms a linked chain ; 3. it extends to many more things : no regard is to be merely natural—no word unweighed—no step precipitate—no meal enjoyed sensually—no joy to evaporate in dissipation—no movement of the heart to have carnal tenderness—no action to have its spring in selfwill.

Point 3.—Our spirits are more utterly humbled, and so victory is most glorious : 1. its secrecy ; who knows if you count your words, &c. ? you carry the mortification of Jesus about you unseen—God is the only spectator of your agony ; 2. because it is hard to realise to oneself that one is doing for God such very petty things ; so there is no room for glory, or support of conscious rectitude.

3.

HEROISM IN LITTLE THINGS.

2.

- I. Little things are not only the field of our best glory and discipline, but also give more glory to God.
- II. Do not think this exaggeration, for God's hatred of venial sin is the measure of the price He puts upon little exactnesses and fidelities.

Composition of Place: Our guardian angel watching us and counting our steps.

- 1. Because more esteem is shown for Him in them: 1. because there is more naked purity of motive and bare faith in them than in great things; 2. because great things by their greatness often hide God: 3. because at best the esteem in great things is mostly divided between God and the glory of the action, and so the whole work is tainted with corruption: whereas the littleness, the vileness, and men's contempt for little things, leave the soul face to face with God in the twilight of interior mortification.
- 2. Because more tribute is given to Him in them:—1. in great things we have more help given, and so give God less, because we have to labour less; the abundance of

grace, the sweetness of it and the animation of spirit from the pursuit of a great object, are three interior principles which lessen our labour: yet our own travail is the real tribute to God, just as dry prayers are said to be more meritorious than sweet ones: 2. we have our liberty in all these little things, and yet we sacrifice it, and this is the highest tribute of fidelity and love.

3. Because more sacrifice is given to Him in them: 1. in thought, because we think little of these little things, and make the sacrifice not in swelling thoughts, but out of a subdued feeling of our own utter nothingness: 2. in sacrificing self-interest, because self-interest is not attracted by anything in these petty sacrifices, and so we seek God only, and put aside the pursuit of praise and self, which in austerities, grand conversions, public congregations, public undertakings, corrupt all we do: 3. we sacrifice our love of manly diligent action, because we hardly reflect upon these little things as distinct moral actions.

Now heroism in little things consists in regularity, littleness, exactness, and obscurity; and this is the only road to solid virtue: it was not what we read of the saints that made them saints; it was what we do not read that enabled them to do the great things we do read: Oh the abhorrence which our nature has to this piece-

meal captivity of little constraints ! arrive at overcoming this, and we are saints !

4.

INSTRUCTION ON DISSIPATION AND LOW SPIRITS.

Dissipation is a sin without a body ; it can make a body of anything, and animate it : it is the worm at the root of the spiritual life ; it works quietly, and hardly ever allows itself to be felt. One of its most dangerous characteristics is, that a person is rarely aware *at the time* that he is guilty of dissipation.

I. In what does dissipation consist ?

1. In putting things off beyond their proper time.
2. In overtalking, and prolonging the time of meals.
3. In indulging in idle and indolent postures of body.
4. In taking up with too many vocal devotions and external observances.
5. In a want of jealousy over self at recreation times : Mary and John, Jesus and Joseph are our models for recreation.
6. In indulging our senses amid the external distractions of nature, and in building castles in the air.

7. In a desire to be often dispensed from rules and little obligations.

II. What are its fruits ?

1. Self-dissatisfaction.
2. Captiousness and self-defence.
3. Positive illtemper.
4. Inclination to judge and criticise.
5. Distractions in prayer.
6. Peevishness at Communion.
7. Effeminate way of performing duties, and great distaste for penance.

III. The devil's object is to produce *sadness*, and therefore the remedies for it are just such things as cause gaiety and cheerfulness in religion.

1. Exactness in little duties.
2. Giving way to others.
3. Set mortifications.
4. Making use of time the subject of particular examen.
5. Use of the discipline.
6. Obedience to bells.
7. To regard not the act only which you do, but the time which obedience has fixed for it : the virtue and significance of the obedience resides often more in the time than in the act.

5.

INSTRUCTION ON THE USE OF TIME AND VOCAL
PRAYER.

Have we collected any fruit from the Retreat?
Have we laid by any particular resolutions?
Have we gained any deeper impressions of our
own remoteness from perfection?

How shall we preserve this little harvest of our
three days' prayer?

1. By looking jealously after our usual way of
spending time:
2. By taking pains with our vocal prayers.

These seem two mean, disappointing, common-
place pieces of advice; but trust me when I say
that they are in reality of *immense* importance.

I. Use of time.

1. Make it the subject of particular examen till
the Assumption.
2. Have a *five minutes* book.
3. Never prolong recreations, remember that
the devotion to which that bell summons you
is to adore our Lord's acts of obedience to
St. Joseph.
4. Seek for mortification in this matter by
doing half-an-hour's work sometimes against
the grain.
5. Confess wasted time in particular and not in
general.

6. Consider unpunctuality as in reality a want of charity, which it always is in a community.
 7. It is giving impurity and illtemper ground to stand on.
- II. Taking pains with vocal prayers: consider them a grand duty of the day, like mass and meditation.
1. Do not burden yourself with too many of them.
 2. Always begin them with a mental act of the presence of God, &c.
 3. Do not say them over again after carelessness, but make an act of contrition.
 4. When a slovenly habit creeps over you, do not say them out of doors, but on your knees, or in your own cell, in some slightly penitential way.
 5. With Rosary and Divine Office, meditate once a month or so on the dignity of them, and the communion into which you enter by reciting them.
 6. Realise that vocal prayer is not only a source of scruples, but even a most prolific occasion of sin.
 7. Never begin them with a most probable interruption staring you in the face.
 8. Take pains with the pronunciation of the words.
 9. Look as little off the book as possible, like St. Charles Borromeo.

II.

FROM RETREAT TO ORDINANDI,
MARYVALE.

1.

OUR OWN VOCATION AS SONS OF ST. PHILIP.

The peculiarity of St. Philip's life as compared with that of St. Alphonso and others, is its continuous supernatural character: so to implant the supernatural in the minds of aliens, and in the affections of cold or ignorant Catholics, is our special vocation; and to this we must turn St. Philip's three things, which he said were to occupy *exclusively* his Congregation.

I. Prayer.

1. As the source of our own influence upon the Church.
2. As a weapon of intercession.
3. To give supernaturalness to our own lives.

II. Preaching.

1. With simplicity, as opposed to the unbelief and reality around us.
2. With learning, as opposed to the ignorance.
3. With affection, as opposed to the coldness.
4. On the saints' lives, the Madonna, &c., as Oratorian subjects, and tending to foster the supernatural.

III. Confessional.

1. With love.
2. With patience.
3. With science, both moral and spiritual.
4. With indifference, and no attachment to penitents or jealousy to others.
5. With special desire to find and train souls ardent for more than common attainments.

2.

MARY THE MODEL OF PRIESTS.

- I. Her continual spirit of oblation and sacrifice during the Infancy and Hidden Years at Nazareth. Her love of God.
- II. Her attendance upon Jesus during His three years' ministry, intercession with Him as at Cana, and cooperation in His preaching. Her love of sinners.
- III. At the foot of the cross, offering sacrifice with Him. Her love of suffering.

3.

DEVOTION TO THE WILL OF GOD.

Compos. of place.—The Thrones imparting the Will of God to the inferior Angels.

Point 1.—Ecclesiastics have the same duty towards the Will of God as the Blessed Thrones :—

1. To make it known. 2. To help it. 3. To make way for it. 4. To work with it.

Point 2.—Devotion to it includes :—1. The end

of Man ; and, 2. It is rehearsing the occupation of eternity ; and, 3. It includes the perfection of a *viator*, which consists in purity of intention ; and, 4. It makes every action supernatural.

Point 3.—As we speak of this or that saint having such and such a special devotion, so devotion to the Will of the Eternal Father seems to have been the special devotion of our Blessed Lord, even more than His love of suffering.

4.

GOING UP TO JERUSALEM THE MODEL OF VOCATION.

Point 1.—Consider the extreme importance of vocation ; a man who frustrates his vocation is in the creation of God as a dislocated limb. Vocation is a revelation made to each one in particular, and out of which his duties spring ; to lose it may be to break the chain of his predestination.

Point 2.—Importance of weaning ourselves from creatures, in order to preserve that interior silence in our souls whereby we may hear the low voice of the Holy Spirit telling us our vocation, and from time to time giving us special drawings and intimations in order to the preservation and perfection of it.

Point 3.—Our Lord's going to Jerusalem the model of a vocation to the ecclesiastical state.

1. In detachment from creatures.

2. In ready submission to obedience even when seeming to lead *from* vocation.
3. In perfect confidence that God will bring matters about, shown by His submission.
4. In zeal for and entire absorption in "His Father's" work.

5.

THE CALL OF THE APOSTLES.

Point 1.—Apparent disproportion between their natural powers and advantages, and the work to which they were called.

Point 2.—Apparent suddenness of their call, though in reality it may have been in the course of a succession of graces.

Point 3.—Personal influence the chief natural thing which has play in the apostolate; hence the importance of the interior life, of outward modesty, of great disinterestedness, of sweetness of manner, and of thoughtfulness of speech.

6.

THE END OF MAN AND THE OTHER CREATURES.

Compos. of place.—Our guardian angel showing us all created things, and teaching us how to discern between what will help and what will hinder us in our one great work of glorifying God by the salvation of our souls.

Point 1.—The End of man is one only, to praise, adore, and serve God, and this by the salvation of his soul. Sublime simplicity of this : face the awfulness of it as a rule, making life a wilderness, and resolve generously. The beginning and end of the spiritual life meet in this. Importance of getting a firm grasp of it.

Point 2.—The end of all other creatures is to help or hinder, or help by hindering us in our pursuit of our one end. We must look at them in no other view ; and by so doing we are saved from attaching ourselves to any of them, whether goods of body, or of mind, or even spiritual blessings, even sacraments and graces. The joyousness of the saints among the creatures, flowers, herbs, birds, &c., still follows this rule ; hence the last meditation of the exercises on the love of God comes into this.

Point 3.—What then is life ? A continual flow of creatures upon us, which come in two ways, either so that we cannot help ourselves, or so that we can make an election. For the first we require a temper of mind ; for the second a principle of choice ; the temper is indifference ; the principle is simply what will help us to our end. St. Teresa's vow always to do what was most perfect was no more than with a wonderful venture of love pledging herself to this. Look over past life

—make acts of salutary confusion—and such resolutions as love may suggest.

7.

GENEROSITY WITH GOD.

Generosity should be the special distinguishing virtue of an ecclesiastic, because he is adopted into the priesthood of Jesus Christ, and his whole life is nothing but sacrifice in detail.

Point 1.—Consider the thirty-three years of our High Priest in this respect.

1. The Infancy.
2. The Eighteen Years.
3. The Three Years.

Point 2.—Consider especially the unreservedness of His generosity in His Passion.

1. In His Divinity.
 1. Restrained from comforting Him.
 2. Strengthening Him to suffer more.
 3. Giving strength and vigour to His tormentors to torment Him with.
2. In His Soul.
 1. Foreseeing everything His whole life long.
 2. Gethsemane, as it were the crucifixion of His Soul, as Calvary was that of His Body.
 3. Continuity, variety, keenness of His humiliations.
3. In His Body.

Nothing held back; His Head, Hands, Feet,

Eyes, Mouth, Back, Heart, all so many instruments of suffering.

Point 3.—Our past half-heartedness.

1. Towards God—scanty prayers—careless examinations—heartless confessions—cold communions—human respects—positive sins.
2. Towards neighbours—selfish in action—unkind in word—ensorious in thought.
3. Towards self—indulgent, conceited, pampering our body, worshipping our own judgment.

Turn away, and make a picture of Jesus dragging Himself wearily up Calvary, and make resolutions against the poor, puny, half-hearted bargaining service we have paid to God hitherto.

III.

INSTRUCTIONS TO ORDINANDI, SYDENHAM, 1852.

1.

WHAT WE COMMIT OURSELVES TO IN THE PRIESTHOOD.

- I. Institution of the secular clergy.
 1. Jesus and the apostles.
 2. Gravity of its obligations.
 3. Life of the Church. Compare it with religious orders.
- II. What we commit ourselves to.
 1. A life of teaching.

1. Virtues necessary for this.
2. Obligation of study—penance of preaching.
3. Also of prayer, both for light and unction.
2. A life of sacrifice.
 1. The adorable sacrifice.
 2. The celibate, and what goes along with it.
 3. View of health and recreation.
 4. Sacrifice the particular shape of the spiritual life.
3. A life of vicarious action and suffering.
 1. How this affects us practically.
 2. It makes life almost an obedience.
 3. And that to unreasonable superiors.
 4. Intercessory character.
4. A life of unworldliness.
 1. The ecclesiastical spirit.
 2. Choice of recreations.
 3. Restriction in reading.
 4. Detachment from relations, flowing out of celibate.
 5. Almsdeeds, given by self, and asked of others.
 6. Sole interests of God and the Church.
- III. Thus a life modelled on the Three Years' Ministry.
 1. Fatigue.
 2. Variety, yet monotony.
 3. Homelessness.
 4. Eaten up by glory of God, and love of souls.
 5. Forgetfulness of self.
 6. Certain ill treatment from men.
 7. Much prayer—by night if not by day.

2.

WHAT IS TO SANCTIFY PRIESTS IN ENGLAND AND
IN THE CONGREGATION.

I. The peculiar difficulties of England.

1. Next to no externals.
2. Mixture with the world and protestants.
3. Absence of faith.
4. Too much to do.

II. The peculiar difficulties of the Congregation.

1. Increasing work.
2. No praise for what you do.
3. You have not your own way in the management of the work.
4. Set hours and duties.

III. How to sanctify ourselves.

1. Every order which has a spirit has its own way of sanctifying.
2. Therefore the secular priesthood.
3. And the more so, as the sacraments are entrusted to it.
4. So we must look *primarily* to the duties of the priesthood for this.
5. How obvious ! yet how seldom done !

IV. What those duties are.

1. Office.
2. Mass.
3. Hearing confessions.
4. Preaching.

V. What is wanted for all these duties in general ?

1. The continual remembrance that they are of obligation.
2. That the priesthood involves perfection.
3. Sole interests of souls to be cultivated in every way.
4. Forgetfulness of self—you have become vicarious.
5. Necessity of unbroken mental prayer.

3.

OFFICE.

I. The importance of the Divine Office.

1. The sole appointed prayer of the whole Church.
2. Under obligation of mortal sin.
3. Its antiquity; and the jealous correction of it.
4. Orders whose chief duty is choir.
5. Composed chiefly of inspired language.
6. Quite unlike any other sort of prayer.
7. How much throughout the whole Church may depend each day upon the proper recital of it.
8. The quantity of theology contained in it; e.g. in the antiphons of the Assumption.
9. Hierarchical character impressed upon it.
10. The service of the city of Rome, especially.
11. The supernatural poetical beauty of it all.
12. Constant efforts of Satan to be rid of it:
e. g. petition of Baden priests.
13. Delight of the saints in it.

14. What we read of holy Oratorians: e. g. Cardinal Colloredo.

15. Scriptural character of our Congregation fed by it.

II. How to recite it well.

1. Some reverent constraining posture.
2. Never to begin without prospect of finishing.
3. Not to say *sleepy* matins late at night.
4. To make good recital of it a subject of prayer.
5. Not to indulge in foolish talk about it.
6. To read commentaries on the Psalms.
7. To go through the 118th in meditation—say at the Oratory.

III. How the reverent recital of it combines penance and spiritual joy.

1. Constant exercises of the hard graces of fidelity, and attention, and diligence.
2. It brings us to an anchor amid distracting cares.
3. Occasional outbreaks of grace that come with it—gushes of sweetness.

On our deathbed what a comfort it will be !

4.

MASS.

I. *The great action of the day to all priests.*

II. *The sum and substance of an Oratorian.*

III. *What is said of St. Luigi Gonzaga and com-*

munion—three days' preparation and three days' thanksgiving.

IV. The awfulness of the act itself.

1. As to assist at Calvary.
2. As to go up to heaven for a brief visit daily.

V. How to do it well.

1. Say office well.
2. Visit the Blessed Sacrament regularly.
3. Infinite jealousy of purity.
4. St. Joseph Calasactius meditated the mass.
5. Diligent use of frequent confession.
6. Special devotion to our Lady.
7. Cultivate the fear of God, and holy trembling before the Majesty of His attributes.
8. Special devotion to the Holy Angels, as had F. Surin and Blessed Alvarez.
9. Humility specially helps to devout saying of mass, in a most remarkable way.
10. To serve mass and get up ceremonies devoutly, which our Congregation particularly entails upon us.

VI. What daily mass most eminently binds us to—a continually increasing *personal* love of Jesus.

PART SECOND.
THE NOVICES.



SECTION I.
CHAPTERS.

I.

THE NOVICE RULE.

1. St. Philip confines his Institute to three objects—Prayer, Preaching, and the Sacraments. If then the attention paid to preaching and sacraments is disproportioned to the attention paid to prayer, the balance of the Institute is overset, and it is to be remarked, that prayer is not only one of the three objects of the Institute, but the *first*.
2. The life of a Father of the Oratory is one in which he has no command of his own time, and consequently cannot set apart many or fixed hours in the day for spiritual exercises. He must have gained a habit of prayer beforehand, be always praying, even on the staircases when called down to his penitents, &c., and his mind must be *quietly* but *habitually* turned to God, so that after necessary distractions, his mind must naturally revert to God, almost without effort, like a bent bow returning to its place.
3. The grand object, therefore, of the Oratorian Novice is to form this habit of prayer before he is called into active work, and this can only be done by fixed times, and a system persevered in.

4. His training, therefore, must be twofold ; he must be taught to prefer Community duties before all else, to rejoice when unexpectedly summoned to some task or other, especially when such summons inconveniences him, and never on pretence of spiritual exercises to neglect the most trivial detail of common observances. This will prepare him for the "slow fever," as the blessed Sebastian calls it, of the Fathers' life, and its perpetual interruptions.
5. Secondly, he must make use of his unengrossed time in forming the habit of prayer, and he must feel sure that in proportion as he neglects this, he will find his perfection ruined when he becomes a Father, and will be a comparatively useless workman, as none but interior men prevail in God's work.
6. The true idea of a perfect Oratorian is one who never does anything noticeable or unusual, but leads quite a common unattractive life, occupied in the common observances, but who never acts from human motives, but from grace, and that even in lawless times and recreations. Grace is to him instead of all other motives, so that while his life is hidden from men, because of its scrupulous commonness, it is most eminently and consistently a superhuman life, a life hidden with *Christ in God*.

II.

DOCUMENTS FOR THE NOVICES OF
THE CONGREGATION.

1. As St. Philip says that he founded the Congregation on the two foundation stones of charity and humility, so it follows that the grace which a Novice should put before himself to acquire is that of a *sweet patience*. This alone will give to all his actions that modest gracefulness which should be the characteristic of Oratorian holiness.
2. To do common things on supernatural principles is solid virtue, and it is just this which is expected of an Oratorian.
3. The Congregation does not help the subjects by spiritual excitements, however good and holy in themselves. She looks to quiet growth, and constancy, and perseverance.
4. We have no change of place, houses, companions, air, and the like, which assist religious who travel about giving missions, neither can we at any time retire for weeks of Community quiet and unusual prayer, as religious do when they return to their convents after the season of missions. We dwell in the same house, in this close city, preach to the same people, sit in the same confessionals, and have to sanctify ourselves by weariness and patience.

5. Hence, if we apply ourselves to the two last of the three occupations, about which St. Philip said we were to be occupied, the administration of the Sacraments and the word of God, and do not make *prayer* the *staple* of our lives, we are not Oratorians, but secular priests who have leave to work in another man's parish, and we shall soon find that our works have no blessing, and that we ourselves are soon tired, fickle, capricious, always beginning things, and unstable in Community, through impatience of contradiction.
6. All good Christians, and especially Ecclesiastics, give some time to prayer, morning and evening; this, therefore, is not enough for us, who are by special obligation men of prayer. We should certainly aim at no less than three hours a day of prayer.
7. We have much to transact with God besides meditation, thanksgiving, intercession for the Church, the Sovereign Pontiff, our country, the Congregation, our penitents, besides the frequent call to put ourselves into His presence, and listen to His inspirations and suggestions, and no day should pass without this being done, except by special interruption.
8. In order to acquire sweet patience, it is well to sweeten our hearts by a direct act two or three times a day, e. g. in our thanksgiving after Mass or Communion, and in going from

the refectory to the two recreations. We should not discontinue this as useless, because we find no bitterness or sourness in our hearts.

9. One of the hardest virtues of Novices is this, which alone would make them perfect, never to speak of each other, of Fathers, of Superiors, or of Community affairs to one another. This is most hard and supernatural, yet without it all goes wrong. It is this fault which causes spiritual exercises, though diligently performed, to bring forth no fruit; if a Novice prays much and gets no holier, you may be sure he does not restrain his tongue. I have been Novice-master four years last Saint Mary Magdalen's day, and I have never known anything go wrong in the noviciate, which was not caused by the tongue. No one without experience can believe the difficulty of keeping this rule.
10. It is an important thing never to forget the beautiful saying of Scupoli that, in nine cases out of ten, when we observe a fault in another it is the devil who has pointed it out to us, whereas it is *always* the Holy Ghost who makes us see the virtues and good points of our neighbour.
11. The books of the Noviciate should be first and foremost the Spiritual Combat, Rodriguez, Da Ponte, and the works of St. Francis of Sales.
12. The daily study of the Bible should on no

account be omitted ; meditation on scripture is quite characteristic of Oratorians.

13. Study is very necessary for a good subject of the Congregation, and if we studied when it was irksome to do so, we should prevent the spirit of duty killing the spirit of prayer, because we should make study itself a mortification.
14. Idleness is one of the commonest temptations in our Institute, a vice especially opposed to our vocation. Every Novice should be holily jealous of his *time*.
15. A Novice should never mention to another any correction or reproof he has received from Superiors.
16. Never begin a work in the first fervour of a new resolution, but wait, keep yourself down, look to God, and do it in cold blood ; the spirit of St. Philip is a curbed spirit.
17. St. Philip wishes many things which he does not command, because his Congregation is one of free service, and self-oblation. Now it is said in his maxims that of all ascetical observances he most valued "silence," and if we keep our own rooms, and do not visit each other out of the two recreations, we shall find that silence is practically part of our rule.
18. It would be well for the Congregation if, when in the Noviciate, human respects are so overcome, that the Novices will talk freely of God to one another.

19. The Novice who does not make his Superior acquainted with abuses and faults which otherwise the Superior cannot know is an enemy to St. Philip, and a pest to the Congregation.
20. The Novice should frequently see his Novice-master, and talk to him of God and his soul. All things are free in the Congregation, but St. Philip would have this intercourse, though periodical manifestations of conscience are not binding. Beware of self-direction.
21. The spirit of our Congregation points rather to the endurance of bodily inconveniences, and the abstaining from remedying them, than to hair shirts, and extra disciplines, though these also are much to be desired. Anything wanted in our room, provided it does not injure health, let us not think of mending.
22. Never study up to bedtime.
23. Talk of God to the Brothers; from you they may hear of Him without being corrected for faults; with the Fathers it is not so; correction is implied when they speak of duty. The Noviciate can do much for the Brothers.
24. Keep document 9. All perfection is there.
25. Do not go quickly up and down stairs, and do not think you can be a good Ecclesiastic without some recollection and composed demeanour, and that you would strive to

remember this and follow it, though it costs something and is a weariness.

26. Whenever in your spiritual reading a verse of scripture comes to your mind with sweetness and force, copy it out in a little book ; you will find it of value. Each of such verses has once been a loving vehicle of the Holy Spirit to you, and the fire often lights up again.
27. Never speak disparagingly of yourself, else you will come to feel disparagingly ; none but a Saint can do so safely ; but pray for self-contempt, and dwell on thoughts that vilify yourself before the purity of the Most High.
28. Never let a day pass without some thought of our Lord's Passion.
29. The Divine Office is a treasure of sanctity which, alas ! escapes the minds of many priests. Office well said would change the face of the earth.
30. Divine love among Oratorians should be a love of compunction, we should always fee the wound in our hearts.
31. Prefer commonplace practices, books, rules, &c., to high or extraordinary ones. Ours is a lowly Congregation.
32. Do not be too familiar with one another, and never indulge in terms of endearment to each other.
33. A jocose spirit is alien to the spirit of St.

Philip, for joking is in the end the death of cheerfulness.

34. Never try to say a clever thing, but avoid doing so to the utmost of your power.
35. While you should never forget that you are a *Novice* yourself, you should also remember that your brother Novices are *Novices* also, else you will get to canonizing little saints among yourselves, which is a great temptation of Noviciates.
36. In learning the spirit of concealment, be content first of all not to mention your austerities and devotions; if you try to do more than this, you will only put on a levity of manner which will mask the seriousness for one day, but will kill by sunset what is masked, and will remain itself an inveterate fault.
37. Be always telling God in secret how immensely you love Him; to say so in secret will not be untrue, for He at last will make it true.
38. Do not legislate and systematise about your own improvement, but be humble, and love, and love, and love, and do nothing but love.
39. Admire every body and thank God
 1. For the graces you observe in them.
 2. For the graces by which your uncharitableness is enabled to observe them.
40. The first thought against obedience is a sweet trial allowed by God, that you may

- learn true obedience: the second thought implies some assent, and is oftentimes a sin.
41. Do not think Superiors have deep views, but take what they say as expressing their whole mind, take it simply and obey it lovingly, mortifying your own ideas.
 42. The thought of God is our true rest from toil, and Jesus and Mary are our recreation.
 43. Do not be afraid of being pious, you must have served God for many a long year before you have any right to be afraid of looking pious.
 44. Do violence to yourself rather than be reserved with Superiors; your repugnance is a sign that nature and Satan fear your openness. Do it as to God.
 45. Whenever a fault of Superiors comes into your mind, make an act of love of him, and commend him to God, and pity him in that he has to govern you who love him so little, and to answer for you at the last day.
 46. Make a great point of keeping your room and clothes clean.
 47. Make some trivial and particular resolution daily, and see at night what has come of it.
 48. Never mention the antecedents of your past life, of your family, or acquaintance.
 49. It may happen sometimes to you to covet great gifts. Well, what has been the one most common among good Oratorians?

Donum Lacrymarum. Unriddle this, and you will see right down into the sweet depths of your vocation.

50. Document 9 ! Document 9 ! God knows I would give my life this hour, if I could purchase you the grace of this.

F. W. F.



III.

HELPS TO PERFECTION.

1. Never say evil of yourself.
2. Never allude without necessity to your life before you entered the Congregation.
3. Never allude to a sermon you have preached or intend to preach.
4. Some one day in the week, sacrifice the time you would have spent in walking out, and try to recreate yourselves in a sweet solitude with the Angels, by conversing with them with much love, and if God wills with tears.
5. Some one day in the week rise earlier than usual, to enter into Communion with the religious all over the world, who have risen early, and make colloquies with Jesus risen. Oh if you knew what early morning graces are, compared with other graces !
6. Never get irregular with your confession days if you can help it, and never go to confes-

sion off-hand, without taking time to excite sorrow.

7. Watch particularly against growing formal with Communion.
8. Set great store by the practice of the particular examen.
9. Silence, and keeping his own room, form the strength of the Oratorian Novice.
10. If ever you catch yourself comparing or measuring yourself with another Novice, go and accuse yourself as soon as possible to your Novice-master.
11. Remember that the forming and modelling devotion of the Oratory is a special devotion to the Holy Ghost; get the habit of saying the *Veni Creator* as you walk from the refectory to recreation, it will last nearly all the way, and give the Indulgence to the soul that had most devotion to the Holy Ghost. How beautiful a procession in the Angels' eyes would that common act then become!
12. Do not say your office quickly, or with your cassock unbuttoned, nor in a lounging posture; make much of your office, as St. Philip did, and whenever you find yourself getting slovenly with it, say it on your knees for three days as a penance.
13. Never let a day pass without reading some portion of the Bible, and before you begin cross yourself, and say, "*Declinate a me*

maligni, &c." It was a practice of St. Gregory the Great.

14. Remember that the three Oratorian graces are Chastity, Charity, and Humility; that simplicity is the security for all these; work hard for simplicity; it is generally the grace of souls devoted to the Holy Ghost.
15. Cultivate a devotion to the words of Jesus, remembering how much Oratorians have to speak, especially when they are priests.
16. Do all your actions with a swift slowness, never in a hurry, never peep over the head of an action at the action which is to follow it: it loses the presence of God.
17. Approach the Holy Ghost through Mary His Spouse, and do not forget the relation between them.
18. The Church makes St. Philip the teacher of the love of God: ask this gift of the Holy Spirit, in order to deepen your love of God. Oh that our hearts were sweetly wounded, and hourly smarting with an abiding compunction!
19. Cultivate a great devotion to the sacrifice of the Mass, and to the sacred ceremonies of the Church, and leave joyfully all occupations, however necessary, to serve and assist. There is a false spirituality which thinks it gets beyond them, and can occupy its time in deeper matters.—I would rather assist devoutly at solemn Vespers, than spend an extasy in my own room. •

20. I wish you to be serious without being less gay, but I cannot tell you how to do it, because I do not know myself. I think St. Raphael, the Angel of joy, will teach you, for his nearness to the Throne must make him serious.
21. You will invoke F. Consolini and Cardinal Baronius every day, and when you have been for some time engaged on other spiritual books, interrupt them, and return to some Oratorian biography, for the spirit of the Institute is very delicate, and will not bear admixture.
22. Love nothing! Fear nothing! Seek nothing! Aim at nothing! Rest in nothing! Accept nothing! but the Great God! and trembling to see yourself begirt with the army of His advancing and coruscating Attributes, in the midst of your gladness and awe, remember me.

F. W. F.



IV.

ORATORIAN LIFE.

1. What we came into Community for.
 2. Why we ask ourselves that question now?
 3. Object of the Institute—danger of prayer
- getting unfairly treated.

4. Love of minute rule the characteristic of the early Oratorians.
 5. *Daily* study of Rule and those biographies.
 6. Difficulty of catching the spirit of the Institute.
 7. Trials of Community Life.
 8. Necessity of basing it on the meditation of eternal truths.
 9. What I want to see.
 1. Great tenderness of feeling to God and sinners.
 2. Great thirst for crosses and humiliations.
 3. Great desire to lead a hidden life.
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V.

OUR VOCATION.

- I. Appearances of drifting away from St. Philip.
 1. Neglect of the Rule in little things.
 2. Want of self-examination on the spirit of the institute.
 3. Little study of Oratorian biography.
- II. Object of God, St. Philip, and the Pope, in guiding us to the Oratory.
 1. We are not to be a new Congregation.
 2. Our sanctity is to be of a peculiar and recognised fashion.
 3. We are absorbed into the Church in this way.
 4. No duty is so paramount as to make our-

selves Oratorians, and not anything else, otherwise we cheat St. Philip by stealing his rule.

5. To act otherwise is to frustrate vocation, and be a dislocated limb in the Church.

III. Consequences on our spiritual life if we do not do this.

1. What it is to have a Saint for a founder, and such a jealous Saint.
2. What it is to traverse the designs of God's Vicar.
3. Loss of
 1. First grace of founders.
 2. Peculiar grace of institute.
 3. Simplicity which God requires of sons of St. Philip.
 4. Also of charity to others who wish to be Oratorians.
4. Anger of God, St. Philip, and the Guardian Angel of the Congregation.
5. Given up in all our interior life to delusions.

IV. Characteristics of Oratorians.

1. Jealousy and love of Rule.
2. Resemblance to St. Philip; modelled on an individual character, which Jesuits are not.
3. Peculiar position of community acts in their sanctification.
4. Childishness of Oratorian community acts.
5. Aversion to any good alien to the institute.

VI.

COMMUNITY SPIRIT.

Most important—because it is not a single grace but the atmosphere of so many graces.

I. In what it consists.

1. *In sentiendo cum communitate*: amid so many hardly anything can please all.
2. Most in indifferent things—in taste rather than opinions.
3. Yet it is sometimes well to conform to it even our adverse opinions.
4. To allow no *tristitia*, because our way is not followed.
5. Least of all, in criticism—and criticisms can only be guarded against at the fountain, which is in our thoughts.

II. Its excellence.

1. So many virtues depend on it, charity, humility, sweetness.
2. Practice of that mortification of the *razionale* so urged by the Saint.
3. Love we get from others, which enables us to help them, and do them good.
4. Also it is often a great exercise of obedience to officers.
5. It is an abiding sense of St. Philip being in the house.

III. Dangers of its absence.

1. As we get older our faults make a deeper impression upon us.
2. Especially faults of temper, which a non-community spirit is both cause and effect of.
3. It isolates us in the house, and so we may come to mope and brood.
4. It is a thing about which it is so easy to be deluded, and it brings so many delusions also along with it.
5. So it becomes a secret sin, and a source of secret sins, which may even come to be a great detriment of our soul.

Our own conduct to others is infected with want of it; some may have this habitually and in all things: Community irritates them, where they are not consulted or have no will of their own: some have it at times, about *anything*; some in particular subject-matters or hobbies. To all we must try to submit and subject ourselves, unjust, ungraceful, and uncongenial though the tyranny may be—look on them as invalids—and especially not keep away from them, because non-communication saves trouble. If we lose the universal spirit, we ourselves lose with it the spirit of Community. To try to make ourselves loved is a distinct work of an Oratorian, and one of his holiest works, which conduces in a special way to his perseverance.

VII.

TAKING AN INTEREST IN DIVINE THINGS.

I have often spoken of acquiring a *taste* for the things of God : this is a matter of the heart : one way to it is learning to take an *interest* in the things of God : which is an affair first of all of the head.

- I. The very little consequence of taking an interest in external things, like conversions, saving souls, &c.
- II. God is to us only within us, so our interest must be *within*.
- III. But the interest is not to be in the past, or in the future, but only in the present.
- IV. And not so much in what God is doing for *us*, as what we are doing for *Him*.
- V. It shows itself in looking at all that happens as something which may help us to love God more than we do.
- VI. It makes much of opportunities, like feasts and seasons.
- VII. It takes the initiative, and invents things, and casts about to invent more ; instance this in the way of keeping a feast.
- VIII. It cherishes enthusiasm, partly as the sure product of real correspondence to grace, and is the safest preservative of a *state* of grace.

- IX. The restlessness of our interest in God is the only peace on earth—an abundant, fertile peace.
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VIII.

TO KNOW NOTHING BUT JESUS CHRIST AND HIM CRUCIFIED.

We live out of the world in the Oratory, yet also in it to save souls; the apostle's words represent our vocation.

I. To seek no kind of excellence but Christ.

II. The same rule with our studies.

1. Multiplicity of studies is a hindrance to prayer, bringing both distraction and abbreviation.

2. It also destroys the unction of preaching.

3. Yet it is very fascinating.

4. Light reading: the way it unnerves the spirit and debauches the mind: to resolve against it is a good mortification.

III. News, and worldly interests, and excitements are to be avoided.

IV. Even in our spiritual life the simplicity of the science of Jesus is to be pursued.

V. Yet all this is very hard: we must be in love with Jesus to enable us to bear this exquisite divine simplicity

VI. Yet why should we seek anything but Jesus?

VII. And Him Crucified! This is the shortest

road to love Him—the safest road with fewest turnings—the simplest road, which of all roads is most crowded by the saints.

IX.

*SINE ME NIHIL POTESTIS FACERE.**I. How much there is in a noviciate to *do* !

1. Repenting of sin.
2. Rooting out sinful habits.
3. Acquiring virtues.
4. Growing supernatural, and getting right tastes.
5. Bearing with others.

II. Dependence on Jesus.

1. Incessant.
2. In minutest things.
3. For ever expressed to Him in prayer.
4. Sensibly felt.
5. Becoming a second nature.

III. Literal truth of it.

1. Because of corrupt nature.
2. Of old habits.
3. Of little immortified unworthinesses.
4. Experience has brought it home to us ;
5. And in ways which would have been incredible beforehand.

* St. John, xv. 5.

IV. Sweetness of it.

1. God is growing so all in all ;
2. With such a special love of Jesus.
3. And self so hateful.
4. And humility so dear.
5. And love so delicious.

Dearest Lord ! It is almost the most musical word He ever said—and it was in His last week—

Sine me nihil potestis facere.

X.

INCREASE OF DEVOTION TO OUR LADY.

I. In our best moods what are we feeling?

1. *General* dissatisfaction at our progress.
2. Some seeming impossibilities to get over.
3. Some answer to prayer about our graces seeming hopeless.
4. Intense desire to be more for God.
5. Some want which, if supplied, would do all we want : yes ! and more than we want, so that coming years will astonish us.

II. It is want of more devotion to our Lady.

1. Not only more in the way of fervour, though that also is necessary.
2. Nor only more in the way of perseverance, though that also is exceedingly needed.
3. But a higher and different devotion, modelling our whole life.

4. Arising from quite a different view of our Blessed Lady.
5. Which will also approach us towards a more worthy worship of God.

III. How to acquire this.

1. Intense imperious prayer to Jesus for it.
2. Reading and meditating on her.
3. Daily colloquy with her.
4. Frequent short vows to her.
5. More belief, and so more perfect trust in her power. It is more our habitual faith in her power, and the idea of it that we want augmenting, than our appreciation of her goodness.

IV. Some remarks on devotion to her.

1. That of the old saints always included some mortifications.
2. In revelations she represents herself as laying great stress on devout bodily postures in devotions to her.
3. Continuity is also an immense point with her.
4. And distinctly using her as a *mediatrix*.
5. Also devotion to her must be very interior.

Now make an immense point of all this in 1862. I will promise you in God's Name and hers quite wonderful things, if you do.

XI.

LOVE OF OUR LADY.

Importance of a Noviciate—no truth greater, no truth less really apprehended.

Our Lady's predilection for religious Congregations: her connection with the Oratory.

I. Our devotion to her ought to consist

1. In acts of ritual worship.
2. In meditation on *quanta fecit Dominus animæ ejus*.
3. In approaching God through her.
4. In getting indulgences for the souls most devoted to her.
5. In thanksgiving to the Holy Trinity for the graces bestowed upon her.
6. In imitating her virtues.
7. In a hot tenderness—this last we must insist on.

II. What this tenderness must be to us.

1. The soul of our piety.
2. The support of our life of work.
3. The charm of our Community life.
4. What domestic love is to men in the world.
5. *Dulcedo*—the sweetness of our perseverance.

XII.

THE YEAR SAINT.

I. On the use of the Year Saint.

1. Thanksgiving daily to the Holy Trinity for his graces.
2. Daily prayer.
3. Some occasional mortification.
4. Some virtue to imitate.
5. Study his writings, if any.

II. On St. Gertrude's Prayers.

1. The spirit of the Oratory, and of ancient spirituality in them.
2. Blossius embodies it: always read the *Insinuations twelve* times a year.
3. To pray the book through, sitting or walking. It also increases devotion to Holy Scripture: and to the Calendar of the Church, which is Oratorian, and most fitting for these times; Sister Emmerich had it.

III. The grace of the New Year:—Humility.

1. Humility before God.
2. Humility with the Community.
3. Constant prayer for it.
4. Particular Examen connected with it.
5. Constantly go to Communion for it, and press upon it in Thanksgiving after Mass.

IV. Devotion of the Year:—To the Godhead of the Eternal Son.

1. Its wonderful efficacy, because it is so dear to God.
 2. It so increases devotion to the Passion.
 3. It makes Mass so sublime, and visits to the Blessed Sacrament.
 4. Reparation needed, and this increases love.
 5. Unexpected largesse of graces will come.
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XIII.

FRAGMENT ON ST. RAPHAEL.

Increase your confidence and redouble your devotion to St. Raphael, the blessed and chosen patron of our Noviciate. I wish I could inspire you with that unhesitating confidence, with that full-hearted love, with that burning devotion, with that as it were intimate and personal communion with this great and glorious spirit which I seem to have myself. I dare not say what he has done for me; and I cannot say with what undoubting faith I commit you to him every night, especially praying him to obtain those graces for you which you do not know you need, and which are therefore the more needful for you. It seems to me as though in the Book of Tobias the Creator had been pleased to give in type a touching portraiture of that forlorn pilgrimage in a foreign land, a vale of exile and of tears, which we call human life—and amid the phenomena which touch us the most is the appear-

ance of St. Raphael, displaced as it were from his own lofty hierarchy of the seven who stand before the Throne of God, and acting the lowlier part of a Guardian Angel, as Gabriel did to the Immaculate Mother of God. I do not penetrate the mystery of this—but it kindles my devotion and intensifies my love. St. Raphael is the pilgrim of the wayfarer, and the physician of the sick soul; and whether we think of him as guiding Tobias by the shores of the Assyrian Tigris, or binding the Evil One in the deserts of Upper Egypt, or troubling the waters of the pool of the Probatica, he is ever the patron of those who wish to lead a hidden life—for he will give us hidden peace, and teach us in his own beautiful words, to “use an invisible meat and drink which cannot be seen by men.” Well then may we pray with holy Church for ourselves and for each other:—

*Angelus nostræ medicus salutis
Adsit e cælo Raphael, ut omnes
Sanet ægrotos, dubiosque vitæ
Dirigat actus.*

Remember always that the spirit of the Oratory, the spirit of your vocation, is the spirit of the Infant Jesus. Take Him for your director; put yourselves under Him; test everything by His maxims, by His tastes, by His interpreted will, by the weights and measures of that infinite abasement, the Childhood of the Eternal. This is the true wisdom of an Oratorian Novice, the wisdom and science of which St. Austin so wonderfully

said, the saint who holds his burning heart in his hand that he may be more ready, ever and in all things, to offer it to God.—*Hanc non docet littera, sed Spiritus ; non ratio sed oratio ; non lectio, sed dilectio ; non argumenta linguarum, sed suspiria lacrymarum ; non clamor oris, sed amor cordis. Huic scientiæ sunt idonei non alta sapientes, sed humilibus consentientes ; non ambulantes in magnis, sed humiliter sentientes.* Oh that there were in us this spirit of holy abjection, of divine littleness, of Christian childhood ! Often have I thought of all of you, more often than you think, and more anxiously and forecastingly than I ought, and I have seemed to see in spirit each one of you brought before the mind of him whom God's choice has touched, that he might single out apostles from among you ; and it seemed as though he passed over some and chose others, and what he looked for was the spirit of a child, and St. Philip was there, and the Child Jesus was in his arms, and a great light went out from the Child into the heart of him who was choosing ; and I bethought me of the house of Isai, in Bethlehem, long ago, and the election that Samuel made therein. *Sanctificavit ergo Isai et filios ejus, et vocavit eos ad sacrificium. Cumque ingressi essent, vidit Eliab, et ait : num coram Domino est Christus ejus ? Et dixit Dominus ad Samuelem : ne respicias vultum ejus, neque altitudinem staturæ ejus : quoniam abjeci eum, nec juxta intuitum hominis ego judico : homo enim vidit ea quæ parent, Dominus autem intuetur cor,*

Et vocavit Isai Abinadab, et adduxit eum coram Samuele. Qui dixit; nec hunc elegit Dominus. Adduxit autem Isai Samma, de quo ait, Etiam hunc non elegit Dominus. Adduxit itaque Isai septem filios suos coram Samuele; et ait Samuel ad Isai, Non elegit Dominus ex istis. Dixitque Samuel ad Isai: Numquid jam completi sunt filii? Qui respondit, Adhuc reliquus est parvulus, et pascit oves. Et ait Samuel ad Isai, Mitte, et adduc eum; nec enim discumbemus prius quam huc ille veniat. Misit ergo et adduxit eum; et ait Dominus, Surge, unge eum, ipse est enim. Tulit ergo Samuel cornu olei, et unxit eum in medio fratrum ejus; et directus est Spiritus Domini a die illa in David, et deinceps.

XIV.

EVE OF ALL SAINTS.

I. What sort of men were the Saints?

1. Men whose lives had few things in them.
2. They lived slowly—were never in a hurry.
3. Lived in the present.
4. Had few interests.
5. Had no attachments.

II. Their manners.

1. They were silent men.
2. Commonplace till quite late on in their lives.
3. Not singular, yet very peculiar.

4. Almost teasingly unexcited.
 5. Union of abstraction with quite amazing minute and universal considerateness.
- III. The study of the Saints, what does it do for us ?
1. Exorcises almost unconsciously endless devils.
 2. Speaks to us in a strange individual way like the Bible.
 3. Gives us two gifts, courage and patience.
 4. Gives us a marvellous science of God and the ways of the Holy Ghost: to *Him* it imparts in us a special devotion.
 5. But, most of all, it possesses us with a *taste* for God, and for celestial things.

XV.

GETTING UP IN THE MORNING.

1. One use of our faults is to get humble and unexcited.
2. They must not, however, make us humble with a despairing humility.
3. The not getting up makes credible to us a cowardice and unworthiness which would have been incredible without.
4. The littleness of the suffering, and the littleness of the indulgence.
5. The littleness of the penance and mortification of our lives : yet we won't do this.

6. It shows us how little we love God.
 7. Nay, it shows our little faith.
 8. Jesus died for us : we begin our day by refusing to take up our cross made of *feathers*.
 9. We begin it by disobedience and by self.
 10. The devil gets our first sacrifice : Mass is the second.
 11. Can we expect the grace of prayer, or *any* great and enviable graces ?
 12. Oh, how profound, how deeper than words should be our humility !
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XVI.

ON THE LOVE OF OUR OWN ROOMS.

When we consider the jealous way in which St. Philip and his successors guarded against the introduction of anything which savoured of the monastic spirit in the Oratory, and when at the same time we are on the look out for any little things which point towards the interior life of an Oratorian, we must be struck with the stress which is laid on the love of our own rooms. We are constantly coming across language which can only be paralleled by the affectionate earnestness with which religious speak of their cells ; witness the frequent expressions of this by Thomas à Kempis in the Imitation. Oratorians call their rooms *nests*; Card. Baronius called the Chiesa Nuova

his nest, and spoke of coming back to die in his nest: there is a domestic character about Oratorian sanctity, but it attaches, not to the fathers and brothers only, but to our very rooms; and inasmuch as St. Philip did not allow us any practice of holy poverty, it was ordered that fathers should furnish their rooms, with simplicity indeed, as everything about the Oratory is simple, but yet so as to make homes of them, and take delight in them. No one can be at all acquainted with Oratorian biography, who has not perceived this and been struck with it. Again, as in the house it is to be desired that each of us should have the character of being fond of his own room and keeping contentedly in its favourite solitude, so out of the house and among others St. Philip loved that his people should have the character of being *casarecci*, stayers at home; and we know how strong he was as well against visits to relations and friends, as against frequenting the palaces of cardinals and prelates in Rome. Now what does all this imply? Here is a community of priests, who are forbidden to let their affections rest on their own family, who are to be known to others by the remarkable title of stayers in the house, who are to love their own rooms and keep in them, who are to adopt this distinctive feature of monasticism, while they are to be jealous of all other resemblances to it, and yet on the other hand they are not to be great students; study is not to be the staple of their occupation; they are rather to be shy of it, and to refrain themselves in

this very respect. I say what does all this imply? Solitude, yet not for study—solitude, yet not simply as a penance: what must it be but solitude for prayer? What can it mean except that prayer is to be our main occupation, the chief employment of our time; prayer the rule, study the exception? And if this be so, what light does it not cast upon our special vocation as Oratorians? It as it were drives us upon the spiritual and interior life; we are not a collection of men living together because we like each other, or because we agree in taking a certain intellectual view of things; but as charity is our instinct, and as prayer is the womb wherein charity is chastely conceived, so we are called by God with this vocation—that we so yearn for the interior life, we so thirst for communion with God, we so long for the union of all the faculties of our mind as well as all the affections of our heart with God, we so prefer hidden and obscure and unnoisy work, that we agree in desiring to fight for God only in prayer or with the strength acquired in prayer, and in choosing, not the mission or the public retreat, not the glorious pilgrimages of the missionary, but such humble work as may find its way to us. Our vocation is in our name; we are Oratorians, i.e. prayers; as is love to the children of St. Francis, and science to the children of St. Dominic, and zeal to the family of Ignatius, and contemplative silence to the Carthusian, and the sick and dying to the household of St. Camillus, and neglected peasants to the Congregation

of St. Alphonso, and poor children to the order of St. Joseph Calasanz, and missions to the Lazarists, and ecclesiastical sanctity to the Sulpicians, so is prayer to the Oratorian ; it is the end to which he is called ; it is the way in which he does his outward works ; it is itself his chief work. Our spirit is a spirit of sacrifice ; we strip our zeal of all the romance and chivalry that might support it ; we mortify our enthusiasm ; we stay at home and take what comes ; we work for God like men who have no will about their work, but take what He may send, and when He sends it, and as He sends it ; and when that work is over, or is interrupted, we love each other and pray, and so fulfil our vocation.

There is no doubt whatever that a common room for any other purpose than that of recreation is contrary to the spirit of the Oratory ; and so long as the circumstances of place or of poverty may anywhere make it necessary, we must protect ourselves from its evil effects by a jealousy of it as an influence opposed to the spirit of our vocation. We are certainly in an Oratorian house expected to live in our own rooms ; our pleasure as well as our mortification must be found in so doing ; we must endeavour to refrain ourselves from a habit easily acquired of collecting in the rooms of others ; for by so doing we do in fact create new recreation times in addition to those provided in the rule, and the very stringency of the rule in making attendance at these recreations compulsory shows how little idea the legislator had of a free and easy

intercourse which would render nearly the whole day long a virtual recreation. But this is not the only evil which results from this practice. Time, so precious to the Oratorian, who knows not how long he shall have any of it at his command, is frittered away and wasted. The spirit of dissipation which kills prayer is introduced into a whole Community; out of that come low spirits; and from them discontent. But we may go even further than this; the practice of collecting in each other's rooms and forming these private uncommunity recreations leads to the *facere Congregationem in Congregatione* which Sozzini so vehemently condemns. Those naturally get together who most sympathise with each other; the primary principle of Community life is gainsaid at starting; the expression of these peculiar sympathies will in nine cases out of ten form the staple of conversation; and it would require nothing short of heroic virtue to prevent this running into criticism of others, discussion of private views, and censure of Superiors. These evils ought to be a subject of serious consideration with all of us, inasmuch as they more or less, but all very grievously, wound fraternal charity. They ought to be a subject of serious consideration to us because it cannot be denied that, to the very dispositions which are most suited to an Oratorian life, this keeping of our own rooms is a considerable penance. A natural love of seclusion, a tendency to solitude as a part of a man's moral temper, would certainly go far to unfit him for the gay, social life of an

Oratorian Community, and would at once contradict that concealment of our spiritual and devotional secrets which ought to be a first principle with the sons of St. Philip. The solitude of an Oratorian must be felt as a mortification, as one of the peculiar penances of his Congregation, as a portion of his special training. It is his safeguard against the *nimia effusio ad externa*, of which Claudio Acquaviva speaks as so fatal to the interior life; it is just that which divides off his Christian mirth from a want of recollection or the buffooning spirit of schoolboys or students. A man who does not put this restraint upon himself, who has not the courage to cut himself off during the proper hours of the day from the voices and eyes of his brothers, will soon find Community life revenge itself upon him, in, first, a habit of listless indolence most difficult to shake off, and, secondly, confirmed low spirits. He will become a source of melancholy to all around him, diffusing about himself an atmosphere of discontent, weariness, and heavy-mindedness. In his measure and in his way the Oratorian who will not take his own room for his hermitage, will do as much evil in the House of St. Philip as a religious who hates his cell would do in a regular monastery. We must be careful to guard against even the first beginnings of this in ourselves; Community life is like a hotbed for the formation of habits, because the fewness of the distracting objects without us increases the intensity of the action within, and a week in Community will rivet a little habit more effectually than a month in the

world: and this peculiarity of Community life, dangerous or precious as the case may be, will meet you at every turn. Be prepared then to find this actually pressing upon you as a mortification; make up your mind to take it as such, to go through with it as such, to merit by it as such. It is no light or little matter to cast ourselves frankly into the companionship of God, to let Him do what He wills with us in times of temptation and of prayer. Solitude is a spiritual wilderness; it has its sounds and sights, its panics and its wild beasts, amid which our Blessed Lord spent His forty days; a man who lives much in such a wilderness as this, forced into spiritual intercourse with the unseen world, must undergo great transformations of character; his solitude will tell upon his active life, and men will perceive that there is a mysterious source of power within him, though they will not be exactly able to say what it is. But there will be such a manifest disproportion between the work he accomplishes and the efforts he makes to accomplish it, that they must needs wonder and raise questions about it.

They who enter this manner of life must indeed look well to themselves; they know not to what they entrust themselves, but they may be sure beforehand that they will come out from it far different from what they were. They must be prepared to cast aside all that is self, and in some sense even the knowledge of self: they must not be anxious to know what is going on within them, to see what progress they are making, or in

what direction that progress is. They must live with and lean on the objects of our faith : when they leave their rooms it is to their brothers they go to diffuse the sunshine of cheerfulness and sweet manners upon them : when they return to their room it is to God, their true Novice-master, to whom they return : and thus self is lost in the Oratory : no room is given for it ; no room can be made for it without displacing what they have no right to displace ; the very frequency of confession causes them to have but glimpses, not a connected view of themselves.

I feel how very imperfectly my own want of attainment and experience causes me to express myself ; but the idea I wish to put before you, and which we ought all to master, is this—to picture to ourselves a man, whose trade, whose occupation is prayer, systematic prayer—to whom prayer is not an exception, not an ornament, not a corrective, not a partial exercise, but the staple of his day, the substance of his employment, the engrossing of his time. Picture such an one to yourselves—see what he would look like—what would come of him in the pulpit, in the confessional, in conversation with strangers, in recreation at home, in community acts, in the great act, to him in truth a little one, of dying.

1. In the pulpit how completely would he realise the idea of an Oratorian preacher. Simplicity and an affectionate earnestness would take the place of what the world calls eloquence.

He would be too deeply penetrated with the presence of God, and too completely overcome with the thought of the value of souls to indulge much in figure and ornament. The style of preaching imposed upon us by our rule would come naturally to him, simply because he leads a life of prayer. He would in his measure approach to that supernatural recollection recorded of F. Yvan, of the French Oratory, who is said always to have been so collected in the exciting act of preaching, as to have always heard the interior voice of God, and to have preached simply what that Voice dictated to him at the time.

2. In the confessional his words would have an effect quite disproportioned to the mere force or wisdom which they might contain in themselves. They would be arrows piercing far into the hearts of his penitents, having attached to them somewhat of that power which our holy father possessed in a miraculous degree, the gift of producing compunction. And so in receiving direction from him we should find that the devotions he recommended, and the advices he gave, would remain in our minds and keep a hold over us we should not know why, and which we could only trace to his supernatural solitude, to the habitual union of his soul with God.

3. So in conversation his influence would be greater than would be seen upon the surface. It would be suggestive, rather than roughride the reason at the time. It would result in acts which would be remote, and which would never in many

cases come to his notice, because God would thus reward his love of secrecy and the hidden life. There would be a calmness, a simplicity, and withal a playful lovingness, which would make us feel as though he were still present with us even when we had left his bodily presence. What he said as well as what he did would rather be striking in the long run than at first sight. People would at length come to feel that while they were with him they had been under some special influence, and that what seemed want of tact, or frivolity, or unworthiness, was in reality the simplicity of a heart so abounding with Divine Love, and so conversant with God's presence and God's ways that it had lost the measure of great and small, which a man necessarily must lose in proportion as he is detached from creatures.

4. And when he came to die, his deathbed would be one of peace and joy mostly: death would seem to him an unimportant act, as in fact we do find most singularly in Oratorian biography that the sons of St. Philip seem to die easily, more easily (taking them as a body) than any others one knows of.

Such would be the deportment of a man who even practised solitude no further than is involved in the Oratorian's love of his own room, and to whom prayer was the grand occupation of life. What such a man would be in recreation at home and in Community acts you can easily conceive; I omit to draw it out: at present it would only be to write our own reproaches. May St. Raphael,

the patron of our Noviciate, help us to travel with so good a heart into the supernatural lands of the interior life, that we may one day know by experience what we speak of now, but stammeringly and foolishly.

XVII.

ON INTERCESSORY PRAYER.

At this present time God is granting us a tranquillity and a solitude which is apparently contrary to our vocation, and which probably no one of us will ever enjoy again until age compels him to retire from the pulpit and the confessional to get himself ready to die. But what may not God intend by this? What fruits may it not bear to us, this quiet time, if only we cultivate it as we ought? And what a strict account shall we not anyhow have to render of it at the last? We have, I hope, agreed to consider this pause as time given for a real Noviciate, for steady advancement in the interior life, for acquiring that secret influence with God which alone will enable us to tell upon our age and country. I do not mean to say that this is the *end* for which we are to acquire the habits of the interior life; God forbid we should think so—God alone, His greater glory, His utter triumphant dominion over us, the Kingdom of Christ within ourselves, this is the all-sufficient

end at which we are to aim. But still it is true with us Oratorians, as it is with the members of many other religious institutes, that our interior life is never to be disjoined from the exercise of active charity. Now therefore, in order not to lose sight of our vocation even for one moment, I would ask you to consider how to cast your interior life into such a shape as that it shall at once bring you nearer to union with God, while at the same time it is constantly giving out the refreshments of charity to others; and the method I propose is a scheme for intercessory prayer. This scheme, and the authoritative injunction of it upon the Novices, has not only the cordial sanction of the Father; but it was his intention, had he continued Novice-master, to have introduced something of the kind himself. Let us then consider some of the incentives which there are to the performance of this duty.

When from our present retirement we look out upon the world, a scene is presented to us, if not more frightful, at least quite as frightful as that which met the eye of St. Catherine in her cell at Siena. If ever the appearance of the world was a call to prayer, surely it is now. The Head of the Church stands alone, keeping at bay the rabble of his own city, and the attacks of anti-church monarchies and new states, as well as the continued violence of the heretic and infidel. The city of sanctuaries, our holy, beautiful, and to us Oratorians native Rome, is in the hands of the spoiler. The religious orders are everywhere being tram-

pled under foot ; corruption of morals daily increasing ; intellectual heresy spreading and deepening ; wars and rumours of wars heard everywhere ; signs of unsettlement in new states, crackings of decay in old ones ; judgments of God out on the earth visibly ; whisperings, dubious and uncertain, but more and more frequent, of reported prophecy ; and something surely in our own minds which answers to all this :—and all these things are so many calls to intercessory prayer.

We know much of old depended on the prayers of St. Bridget and St. Catherine ; and you need hardly be reminded of the fewness of the just men who were needed to spare Sodom and Gomorrha. At this present moment the peninsula of Italy, which has hitherto evaded the encroaching torrents of heresy, and from the fair fields of which the Angel of God's wrath has been so often bidden to refrain his hand, seems on the point of being broken up ; the temporal power of the Pontiffs slipping from them ; the religious orders who were still in the vigour of their zeal the objects of persecution to Catholic governments and mobs ; heresy and unbelief invading even the ranks of the clergy, and occupying presses which once teemed with novenas and books of meditation ; yet Italy's escape from all these evils may hang upon the prayers of some unknown nun, who in the mountainous recesses of the preternatural Umbria, the theatre of the old Franciscan wonders, is clasping her crucifix to her breast, and praying to

the Spouse of her soul for the welfare of His Church, and the victory of His Vicar upon earth. There are indeed few things which more naturally call out the homage of our grateful wonder than the power of prayer, the way in which God has been pleased to make the decrees of His Providence depend on the intercession of His creatures. Let us turn our thoughts this way in our meditations and colloquies with God for the next two or three days ; and the subject will open out visibly before us, and we may perhaps come to see this duty of intercessory prayer in a light in which we have never seen it before.

Upon converts this duty presses with peculiar force : who knows whether we ourselves are not the children of prayer ? Who knows to what secret and far-off intercessions he may not owe the interposition of God in his behalf ? Let him set a price, if the activity of his imagination can enable him to do so, upon the value of sanctifying grace, and then think that this may have been won for him by intercessory prayer. Is it saying too much to assert that the form and shape which a convert's interior life is to take should be moulded upon this duty of being a fellow-labourer with God by intercession, of assisting Him (I know what great words I am using) in the government of the world, of helping to aim His gracious Providence at this or that mark ?

Then again as Oratorians we are men of prayer ; and intercession is one most important branch of prayer : as Oratorians our sanctification consists

in charity towards others ; and intercession is a most potent and heavenly charity ; as Oratorians we are bound to give the preference to hidden works and modest enterprises, and what more hidden than that which passes only between God and ourselves ; as Oratorians we are at present unable to answer the ends of our vocation outwardly, and intercession is a means of making up the loss to our neighbour and to God.

So much for the importance of the duty ; and so much for the call upon ourselves. But I have three more things to remark : first, that the duty is one so overwhelming in extent, and so distracting and perplexing as well from its own variety as from the stormy state of the world, that men quail before the contemplation of it, and unless it is systematised for them, are likely to do nothing, because there is so much to do ; secondly, that while we are well supplied with books for hearing mass, for meditation, for examen of conscience, and the like, we are taught very little about the methods of intercessory prayer : this is singular, and seems a want that ought to be supplied, and which at any rate we ought to supply for ourselves ; thirdly, that as *our* great object just now is to learn to live interior lives, we must see if we cannot devise some method of intercessory prayer which shall not overload us with vocal prayers, but rather foster that interior life at which we are aiming.

XVIII.

ON FORMAL THANKSGIVING.

My dear Brothers,

The subject which I have chosen to speak to you about in this chapter may strike you both as too much a matter of detail and too much a matter of private devotion to furnish the basis of a public instruction. But the great object we have before us just now is to form in ourselves by the grace of God an interior spirit which shall animate all our actions, and supernaturalise even the most ordinary ones, and yet which shall have about it all the distinctive marks of the vocation of St. Philip's children. It is not, however, by lucid canons or definite statements that we can get a clear idea of this interior spirit; it is by seeing it exemplified in this or that particular instance, by observing the turn it gives to those actions or observances which form a part of every one's spiritual day, and the kind of peculiar impression which it makes upon them. And when I think of that sweet wonder which once was upon the earth—St. Philip's mass—I do not think I can do better than select the act of thanksgiving after mass and communion, in order to illustrate the interior spirit which ought to be characteristic of an Oratorian. Oh what a holy marvel was our Blessed Founder's mass! What streams of

thought and feeling spring up, as it were, unbidden, at the very thought of the Holy Father's mass ! and remembering his extraordinary gift of foreseeing and foretelling future events, may we not suppose that we ourselves may have been concerned in what was done in that dark and little room? Anyhow, to us as Oratorians mass and the actions which regard the mass must have a peculiar interest and importance ; and we shall gain much by taking one of these actions, namely, the thanksgiving, and seeing how we should make it if we were thoroughly penetrated with the spirit of St. Philip. I do not at all mean to say that those who make their thanksgiving in any particular way of their own, which they find most readily to inflame their affections and to give anything like a satisfactory vent to what is most within them at the time, should abandon their own method and adopt mine. Far from it. What I had rather in view was this—that those who have no particular method, might have a pattern shown them which they might modify for themselves, that those who have a method might perhaps derive some hints which they could improve upon, and that we might all see something of the spirit of an Oratorian, illustrated in an action which is of daily occurrence to nearly all of us.

There are in most cases no moments of this our time of trial which tell so much upon eternity as the few minutes after mass and communion—the little while that Jesus is inhabiting us. Of those moments it may indeed in a deep sense be said,

Adhuc modicum tempus vobiscum sum : et vado ad eum qui me misit. Quæretis me, et non invenietis : et ubi ego sum, vos non potestis venire. Yet how often do they elapse in a mere repose after the great action which we have just performed ! How often are they filled with importunate and teasing distractions, which throng upon us just at the very time, as if to show how the Evil One dreaded them. How often do we ask nothing, resolve nothing, offer nothing ! He came into us ; He held His court, but no one came to pay Him homage, and He has had to go away dishonoured, while the Angels that were watching round us wondering, mourned how we could be so cold.

Now one reason, perhaps, why we make such little account of our thanksgiving, and it makes such little impression upon us, may be that we do not make it upon any system, upon any cognizable principle, or connect it in any way with our general interior life. It stands alone—it springs from nothing, and runs into nothing, and so it does not melt into our whole day, giving it that sweet savour which we must needs suppose St. Philip's mass gave to his. I propose then to suggest a method of thanksgiving congenial to the interior life which we are endeavouring to lead, one which shall be of a piece with the rest of our spiritual day. As I said before, it may afford hints even to those who have a way of their own already.

1. When a person, whose mind is deeply imbued with that peculiar and supernatural feeling which the science of the saints and the pursuit of perfec-

tion imparts, retires from mass or communion to his seat in church, it appears to me that the natural thing for him to do is, not directly to return God thanks for the great and unspeakable Gift bestowed upon him, but to satisfy his love, which can no otherwise be satisfied, by making acts of his own nothingness. Prostrating himself before the beneficent Majesty of God, prostrating himself in the very dust of lowly and self-hating thoughts, he will joy in the confession of his own utter nothingness. He will confront his vile ignoble origin, that helpless nothingness out of which the word of God has called him; and while he confesses it, he will find in the confession something which satisfies at once many of the deep emotions which fill his breast.

2. But there is a depth lower still which the humility of love can find. To acts of nothingness succeed by natural right of succession acts of our own confusion, acts which come more home to us, breed more compunction, and bring us nigher still unto the blessed fount of sacred tears. Love forgets not even to confound herself and cover herself with shame for that guilt of original sin which the waters of regeneration have long since washed away. How much more does she do this for actual sin! It is not that a man at such a moment is likely to realise, or that it is even well he should try to realise, individual acts of sin; but the horrid total, the horrid, consistent amount of guilt and shame presses upon him, and though he cannot sweat blood, as his Saviour did when that

selfsame load, those very sins were heavy upon His stainless Soul, yet is this confusion many times a winepress of tears, dear to God and precious in His sight. The meanness of infirmities, the ungenerous vulgarity of self love, the shame of an easy life, the vileness of indulgent ways, the cowardly want of correspondence to interior calls—these things, no less than sins, overwhelm him then, so piercing and penetrating his spirit, that they sometimes transform acts of confusion into acts of perfect contrition, through the very vehemence and purity of the love which dictates them.

8. How easy and natural then is the transition to the thought of God's past mercies to us, to the prolonged affectionate dwelling upon some of the special instances of His loving kindness and fore-ordained purposes upon us. And this brings us at once into thanksgiving properly so called. It is said of our Blessed Lady that she brooded upon God's dealings with her, and weighed them in the silence of her heart ; and the character of Jacob the patriarch, whose life is so peculiarly attractive to English people, for that pleasant sadness and perpetual pensiveness which distinguishes it, is marked by nothing more strongly than frequent recurring quotations of God's past mercies to him, as well to kindle his love for the past as to animate his confidence for the future. It would seem from the biography of the Congregation as if this was also one of the tokens of an Oratorian character. As the Jesuit school, especially the French Jesuit

school, of direction seems to aim at the bare, lofty, and naked heights of heroic detachment, and sacrifices somewhat of the gentleness of sanctity in its aim, so the Oratorian school has certain features which look like attachment to created things, and yet are not, though they certainly present difficulties to a thoughtful person at first sight ; and this is one of them—this fond dwelling upon past mercies, this pensive brooding over life gone by as though it were, now that it is past and far enough off to be visible, a kind of private revelation to each one of us of love, of assiduous goodness, perhaps of our election. It is one of the things which give such a domestic character to Oratorian holiness. I cannot conceive that in the case of a perfect Oratorian God's past mercies would not form a frequent subject of meditation, and enter so deeply into his devotions as to form a characteristic of them. It is, in fact, one of the ways by which the Oratorian confessor gains his winning gentleness in his tribunal of patient and hopeful love. I should be glad to think that you would consider what I have said about this : it involves principles, principles of the interior life ; it presents difficulties which every Oratorian Novice will have to deal with sooner or later. But to return to the subject before us :—

When we have satisfied ourselves with acts of confusion, we go on naturally to dwell upon God's past mercies to us ; and, as nearly everywhere else in matters spiritual general considerations avail

little, so here we are led, not only to sum up in our own minds His past goodness to ourselves, but to specify certain prominent mercies, and especially those great acts of His abounding love, to which amid all the other mysteries of the faith we have been led to have a special devotion.

Little need be said on this part of the subject. It will naturally vary with the individual mind; but I suppose that a set and formal act of gratitude to God for the mystery of the Incarnation, for the adorable Sacrament of the Altar, for the glory of Mary, and for the graces of our Guardian Angel, would naturally find a place in the thanksgiving of a thoughtful and interior man.

4. Let us recapitulate a moment, and see what we have done. We have in the fervour of our love, hot from the altar, the last kiss of its sacred ledge burning upon our lips, and yet which is but cold compared with the sweet fever which the Burning Coal has caused in our heart of hearts; we have, I say, to satisfy our love, thrown ourselves into the thought of our own nothingness, and, not content with that, have sunk overhead in the vast sea of our own confusion; then in the childlike fatigue of affectionate humility we have set ourselves to brood with an unconstrained diligence upon God's past mercies to ourselves, and upon those mysteries of our most holy faith to which He has given a special power to kindle love within us. Again our humility and self-distrust return; again love mounts so high and burns so strongly that self-abasement alone can satisfy it; and we give God

His gifts back again; we return them as being unworthy of them; we return them as at a loss to know what other oblation to make to Him; we put them from us, not in the spirit of the profane monarch of old who craved not for a heavenly sign, but because we can only enjoy them in their fulness by returning them to God, and stripping ourselves of those very things which make us objects of love in His sight. Yes! there are those who are called to joy in imitating the seemingly guilty abjection of Jesus before the Eternal Father. But each one must stop at the point which is the limit to him of what is real in his spiritual life.

5. This giving back of His own gifts to God leads us on to that feeling which is one of the special badges of an interior man, joy, deep spiritual joy, in the thought of the acknowledgment of God's absolute and unconditional dominion over us. In afflictions, in temptations, in spiritual dryness and abandonment, this joy, often, most often not felt and recognised as a joy, is our secret support; by it the heart solves fearful mysteries which the reason has passed by and dare not touch; by it men have held on to the Cross when a whole world of tribulations was pressing upon them to force them from it. That we have so little to do with ourselves, that we are not our own, that we are being led on in the dark, that we are helpless as children, and foolish as those who dote, that we are the sport of Providence and have no dignity but abjection—these are the reflections which are, as it were, wide pastures to the soul,

where it can feed unstraitened, and grow in spiritual growth. The sense of trust, the sense of leaning upon God, the sense of being unclothed of self—there are no thoughts which can engross the soul more sweetly or for a longer time together than these. Sometimes a man can rest in these thoughts, and find himself profitably employed without any particular practice of this acknowledgment of God's sovereignty; at other times he may bring sense after sense, faculty after faculty, affection after affection, as so many vassals to the throne of Jesus set up for a little while within his heart, to offer themselves afresh to Him, to abjure all service but His, and to receive His Benediction. There is no shorter road, except the thirst for suffering, to the interior life, than the cultivation and frequent practice of the acknowledgment of God's supreme dominion over us; and it is a remarkable fact connected with this point, which is related I think of F. Consolini, that he could not read with contentment any treatises on grace but those which took a strong Thomist view, diminishing to the utmost, as his biographer observes, the extent of man's freewill, and magnifying the absoluteness of the Will of God.

6. I know not how it is, but out of this joyous childlike feeling of God's sovereignty over us, there rises in the mind a desire for suffering, as if the pressure of His Hand in the ordinary course of Providence was too gentle on us, and that we longed to feel it yet more heavily. A man who has an habitual thirst for suffering is already

an interior man. Happy are we if we have it: it is a talent which we must multiply beyond all others. I need hardly say that such a blessed thirst is greatly to be prized, never to be feared, and sure of satisfaction one day; at the same time there are delusions near it and around it, and we must not let that inward thirst find outward vent in formal prayer without the knowledge of him to whom we have committed the guidance of our souls.

This is a sketch of what strikes me as the natural Oratorian thanksgiving after mass or communion: acts of nothingness, passing on into acts of confusion, which lead us to dwell with wondering love on God's past mercies to us; this consideration lighting up our own unworthiness, leads us to return God's gifts to Him as an act of oblation, and to a desire to receive them from Him over again in a mood of more considerate and humble thanksgiving; the joyful acknowledgment of His sovereign dominion over us is the consequence of this, and the cause of a thirst for suffering springing up within the soul, to which at such a time we may venture to give expression, if not in formal prayer, at least in trembling, hopeful aspiration.

Of some such nature we may suppose were the thoughts that were uppermost in our Blessed Father's heart, when they who met him returning from the altar were startled by the ashy deathlike paleness of his face.

XIX.

STUDY.

- I. Beatific Vision consists chiefly in the knowledge of God: the love and the joy come from this knowledge: to know God is the science of the saints and of the priesthood.
 1. The evils of an ignorant priest anywhere and in any station.
 2. In the nineteenth century especially, when men's minds have travelled from God.
 3. In England, because it is an heretical country.
 4. In the Oratory, because of our vocation and peculiar work.
 5. Especially importance of giving a theological turn to all branches of modern knowledge.
- II. The connection between spirituality and study.
 1. The Noviciate is the especial time for both.
 2. What Novices want is manliness, in thought and conversation—study helps to give it them.
 3. It gives them an abundance in their meditations.
 4. It helps greatly to the perpetual practice of the presence of God.
 5. Carnal or worldly knowledge means knowledge acquired for ends which lie outside or short of God: the well-known texts don't apply to *our* studies, whatever their object may be.

6. Danger of Novices making too much rest in rules—and so no interior spirit being formed : study helps to form this interior spirit.
7. Objection that study hinders prayer, while Oratorians are simply men of prayer ; those who cannot unite study and prayer are not good enough for the Oratory. Their spirituality is not only not interior—it is simply infantine and worthless : I would not give sixpence for a man who requires to be always reading pious books and praying in order to think of God and to love Him ardently. Devotion to the *doctors* of the Church.

III. Your future as Fathers.

1. Work as preachers: connection of study with this.
2. Conversation, especially with heretics of education.
3. Consultation by penitents : e.g. as to mesmerism, scientific objections, &c.
4. Recreation rescued by study from—1. frivolity and 2. detraction and gossip.
5. Our influence regarded as a diffused spirit.

But study, while it interests and elevates, also mortifies. I shall be annoyed if you seem to take it as a bore. To be learned you must put your shoulder to the wheel manfully, and keep at it, and make your studies a prominent subject of your prayers.

XX.

HEARING THE SERMONS.

- I. Immense value to be set on all parts of the Rule, which are St. Philip's own.
 1. As if we ourselves had a talk with him.
 2. We know the depths of wisdom there must be in them.
 3. Hearing sermons is one on which he lays stress.
 4. And hearing sermons is called by theologians a sign of predestination.
 5. The special need future preachers have of it.
- II. The act itself considered as a spiritual exercise.
 1. Helps to the spirit of interior observance.
 2. Temptations against purity and charity are least likely then.
 3. Joining in prayers and hymns with others, especially the poor.
 4. Teaches simplicity, as it is often a fight against criticism.
 5. Makes you value chapters and get unction.
- III. Practices.
 1. Determine to be taught and corrected each time.
 2. Never by any means mention for good or evil any sermon afterwards ; just like doubts at Recreation.

3. Never speak of the thing itself as a bore.

4. Pray that you may preach as well.

5. Pray that the preachers may touch souls.

Story of the Jesuit lay-brother.

Make the hearing of each sermon an act in which you renew your intention to begin afresh loving and serving God.

XXI.

GRACE.

Fili, pretiosa est gratia mea: non patitur se misceri extraneis rebus, nec consolationibus terrenis.—Imitation, iii. 53.

- I. How experience shows us the difficulty of perseverance: numbers go wrong, and even lose their vocations.
- II. Our own want of growth—continued faults—appearance of new ones.
- III. In most cases the secret of all this is in the mixing of grace with undivine things.
- IV. We do not sufficiently realise the mischief of a thing from its being simply *undivine*, without its being at all wrong in itself.
- V. To keep our vocations, we must be *all for God*—this must be our rule.
- VI. This is why I am against newspapers, against taking snuff, &c. &c.
- VII. *Small things, little things, tiny* licenses are

more dangerous than big ones, as they do not rouse conscience, and so we remain in ignorance of our decadence.

- VIII. Remember, it is not merely great graces and sweetnesses, divine helps and heavenly consolations which we forfeit by this mixture of grace, but even virtues and vocations.
- IX. Graces are intercepted by it—graces we possess *neutralised*.
- X. Read chapters 53 and 56 of the Imitation, book iii., and read those two chapters every day of the holydays: they will tell even on your *eternity*.

XXII.

SIMPLICITY.

Few things in the spiritual life of such importance.

1. It is a glorious imitation of God.
2. It was the beauty of the character of Jesus.
3. It was the seal of the sanctity of Mary.
4. It is the unmanifold life of the angels.
5. It was the end the Saints aimed at and came to.

Practices and observations.

1. Immense aiming at truth and sincerity in unimportant details.
2. Practising the presence of God.
3. Making all life prayer.
4. Not burdening ourselves with devotions and practices.

5. Not having many spiritual books.
 6. Having simple ones.
 7. Reading slowly, not devouring a book.
 8. Tranquillity, avoidance of excitement: repose is easier in simple thoughts.
 9. Never try to please.
 10. Never think of what you will say to superiors, but speak out unartificially, and what comes first.
 11. Consider Community acts the most spiritual of your spiritual exercises.
 12. Cultivate a special devotion to the Will of God.
- . St. Philip's simplicity.

XXIII.

DE CASTITATE.

Our Lord feeding among the lilies until the day break and the shadows flee away.*

- I. Primary importance of this virtue.
- II. First step is to fall in love with it—which is just what Jesus does—lust is *His* opposite: e. g. mystical *marriage*.
- III. On the whole, though conditionally, to pray against having the temptations.
- IV. Yet certainly there is a peculiar depth and masculine cheerfulness from having successfully resisted such temptations.

* Cant. ii. 16.

V. Formless, nameless foreshadows which these temptations, unlike any others, cast : then is the time to fight them.

VI. Great devotion to Guardian Angel is a help : St. Ambrose says chastity multiplies Angels round us.

VII. Humility also is the chief help.

VIII. And also sweetness of temper : also guard against *curiosity*.

IX. Privileges of chastity.

1. Apostolic fruitfulness :—Isaias lvi.

2. Intimacy with God of quite a peculiar kind.

3. It even opens to us the possibility of extraordinary graces.

4. Intense spiritual sweetness of the virtue in itself.

5. Follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth : i. e. being docile to inspirations, regularly under the attractions of Jesus—and penetrating *with Him* into highest regions of calm and bliss and golden light.

Connection of chastity with devotion to the Second Person of the Most Holy Trinity.

XXIV.

HUMILITY.

- I. Its exceeding beauty in the sight of God : e. g.
in our Lady.
- II. Occasions of practising it are daily in our
power.
- III. It helps to all other virtues : but especially
three—Peace—Purity—Prayer.
- IV. It gives us immense confidence in God.
- V. Its exercise.
 1. In a good state.
 2. In temptations.
 3. In falls.
- VI. Never on any account prefer ourselves to
any one in any one respect at any single
time.
- VII. The unworldliness it breeds.
 1. We dare not judge where we have no duties
to do so—and we have seldom any duties in
the concerns of others.
 2. We grow detached by being humble.
 3. Also it is a virtue which we especially fall in
love with, and so we pursue it, caring little for
other things.
 4. Its perfection is in little trials, not in great
ones, where it is easier.
 5. Not to be cast down at the occasional fearful
upboilings of a pride we thought extinct.

XXV.

COMPUNCTION.

Beati qui lavant stolas suas in Sanguine Agni.

We took compunction as the grace to ask for this Lent ; it is the beauty of grace, and the happiness of grace : the mother of graces and the perseverance of graces.

I. Constant thought of our own exceeding sinfulness, not unworthiness but sinfulness.

1. The facility it gives to the practice of many virtues, charity, humility, absence of disappointments, penance, and patience.

2. The peace and interiorness which it gives to the mind.

3. The positive happiness and high spirits, because

1. Of the constant thought of God's pardon.

2. Of the value of grace which it makes us feel.

3. Of surprise that we are not far worse.

4. Of surprise that so many love us and treat us well.

5. Of a kind of nameless feeling of predestination.

II. Hence always be at the *amplius lava me* :—

1. By reflection on our own sinfulness.

2. By frequent acts of contrition.

3. By great diligence in preparing for confession, and thanksgiving after it.
 4. By noticing the possibilities of sin which are so often disclosing themselves in us.
 5. By perpetual thanksgiving for the "Blood of the Lamb."
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XXVI.

MORTIFICATION.

The Month of Mary is a time for quiet review and renovation.

We read of hearts fluttering with love—of sweet tears gushing—of the names of Jesus and Mary sounding like trumpets deep down within our souls—of the thought of God causing deep peace, or a sinking of heart almost painful, yet so delightful : is it so with us ?

The way to divine love is mortification.

1. No one is ever holy without it.
2. No one in Community, in the long run, is happy without it.
3. We cannot love without it.
4. We cannot be loved without it.
5. We shall not succeed without it.
6. We shall not gain the spirit of St. Philip without it.
7. Prayer is impossible without it.
8. We shall not be objects of Mary's predilection without it.

9. Above all—we cannot enter into the secret delights of divine love without it.

Our Lady will get us the grace: we must remember that, while mortification is a grace we never cast away in the highest states, but are always growing in, it is a grace not to wait for, but to begin with: it is the *sole beginning*. I do not think it is in my power to say anything to you of greater importance than this—that mortification is the only real *beginning* of spirituality. In other matters progress is from easy things to harder: in the matter of mortification it is from hard to easier.

XXVII.

SILENCE ABOUT OTHERS.

Numquam eris internus et devotus, nisi de alienis silueris. Imitatio lib. ii. cap. 5.

What astonishes me most in my spiritual life is the extreme slowness of my progress.

What this comes from.

1. My cowardice.
2. My irregularity and intermittingness.
3. My want of prayer.
4. My unsupernaturalness about *little things*.
5. My tongue.

I want to be interior and devout.

- I. Interior, by
 1. Self-knowledge.

2. Self-hatred.
3. Oblivion of others' faults.
4. No outward interests.
5. Compunction.

II. Devout, by

1. Interest in God.
2. Enthusiasm : and holy disquietude.
3. Sensible heat.
4. Growing love of the Cross.
5. Promptitude to *do*.

But no—*nisi silueris de alienis*. Here is the condition, the *sine qua non* of devotion.

1. Not to blame.
2. Not to talk even of indifferent things of *persons*.
3. To excuse, when silence would be blame.
4. Not even to praise.
5. If we want not to *speak*, we must try not to *think* of them : put thought of others away, as you would temptations.

XXVIII.

HARMONY IN COMMUNITY.

- I. Read the story of Macarius in the *Diario Spirituale* for January 16.
 1. Our sense of the strangeness and exaggeration of it.
 2. Yet this shows we do not judge with God.

3. The more I think of it the stranger it seems to me : but also the more divine.

II. How to attain a similar spirit.

1. Often to reflect on some good point in each of our brothers.
2. And then on the opposite fault in ourselves.
3. Or on our own little progress in that virtue or grace.
4. To do so most in the case of those whom we are most inclined to criticise.
5. Never to claim rights, or even to let ourselves feel that we have any rights; the spirit of rights is a most fatal spirit—both as to obedience and charity.
6. Charitable *thoughts* are the only security of charitable deeds and words : they save us from surprises, especially surprises of temper.

It is the grand preaching of the Gospel—by this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, because ye love one another.

III. But why does it so stand for perfection ?

1. Because it ensures humility.
2. And government of the tongue.
3. And always taking a supernatural view of things.
4. And mortification, especially of judgment.
5. And because it so merits augmentations of *divine* love.

XXIX.

WHAT WE ARE TO DO WITH OUR
UNHAPPINESSES IN COMMUNITY.

The subtlety of self-love met by a certain subtle genius of Community, which helps us to strip ourselves of self.

I. Sources of our unhappiness.

1. Little faults on the part of others—especially inconsideratenesses.
2. Difficulties in the performance of duties.
3. Natural *insurgency* against obedience.
4. Illtemper and natural character.
5. Ailments and fatigue.

Many of these are almost inevitable until we are quite saints—so we must not allow them to discourage us.

II. Use and abuse of these unhappinesses.

1. Abuse.

1. Unhappiness is a catching thing—so we must not communicate them.
2. To do so is also to supply the devil with means of tempting our brothers.
3. It makes us exaggerate them also to ourselves.
4. And so makes them last longer.
5. And we thus forfeit a great deal of love in Community.

2. Use.

1. Bear them in silence—to have secrets, not of sin, with God is a quick advance in the spiritual life.
 2. They are mortifications by which we merit greatly, and make much way in a little time.
 3. We have really greater power over ourselves in this respect than we usually imagine.
 4. This repression of illtemper has a hidden power of bringing spiritual sweetness with it.
 5. A nameless grace and charm steal over our whole lives from it, making us loved, and drawing us more and more closely to God.
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XXX.

COLDNESS.

There are some things which seem worse than sins, because they are the atmosphere of many sins: one of these things is coldness in the service of God.

I. Description of coldness.

1. Positive disgust for spiritual things.
2. Or being simply bored by them.
3. And this even without a positive appetite for worldly things.
4. A formality, which finds reverence a very difficult thing.

5. Uniformity in our spiritual life is almost always a proof of coldness.

II. Kinds of coldness.

1. A coldness which gives us no pain at all, and does not frighten us.
2. A coldness which fidgets us, but fails to rouse us.
3. A coldness which irritates us, but does not make us manfully fight it off.
4. A coldness which is a punishment of venial sin and lukewarmness.
5. A coldness which is a permitted trial, but is always to be combated : we grow hot by fighting.

III. Remedies.

1. Bodily mortifications, no matter with what disgust.
2. Increased care with the Sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist.
3. Increased spiritual reading : especially of the Gospels.
4. Manifestation of conscience to Novice-master or Superior.
5. Some special devotions to our Lady and the Holy Souls.

The perception of changeful spiritual experiences and operations of grace gives the only tranquil confidence that we are not cold.

A holy, humble disquietude is our only rest on earth.

XXXI.

BEGINNING OF LENT.

Something extra to be done for Lent.

1. More bodily mortifications.
2. More inward—say to practise silence.
3. Compunction : we ought each to be in hell now.
4. Bury yourself in the Passion.
 1. Not as a sweetness, but as a mortification even to weariness.
 2. Read of scarcely anything else.
 3. Get indulgences for the soul most devoted to the Passion.
 4. St. Gertrude's Part on the Passion.
 5. Ask Jesus for compunction : say the three prayers out of the Missal for tears ; and read Imitation, i. 21.

Do not take any of this up lightly—but with great seriousness.

XXXII.

THE POSSIBILITY OF OUR BEING LOST.

“It is not certain that I may not be one of the damned in hell.” A thought I had in my own retreat on Shrove Tuesday.

I. Think of the damned. Then is not this thought more incredible than any of the difficulties of the Faith, the Holy Trinity, or the Blessed Eucharist? Yet I know it to be a certain truth. Then must it not fill me with a holy desperation?

II. What must it not do for me

1. In the matter of prayer.
2. In the matter of holy fear.
3. In the matter of humility, which chiefly fills hell: and of wonder at God's love of me, a love which is only possible to a God.
4. In the matter of perseverance.
5. In the matter of utterest leaning on God.

Yet up to my last breath it will still be true that—

“It is not certain that I may not be one of the damned in hell.”

XXXIII.

ANTICIPATION OF OLD AGE.

God's character is to like to have given Him by anticipation what He knows He will one day have: He has a special love for our not letting time do the work of grace, but the reverse. Instances of what we *shall* do when old, and *may* do now.

1. We shall narrow everything down to God.

2. We shall be less intellectual, e.g. in spiritual reading, &c. The heart will come uppermost.
3. We shall expect less from others.
4. We shall distrust ourselves more.
5. We shall unlearn contempt.

Now we shall gain years in the life of grace, if we do these five things now.

PART SECOND.
THE NOVICES.



SECTION II.
RETREATS.

I.

CARNIVAL RETREAT.
INSTRUCTIONS.

1.

ON OUR VOCATION.

- I. What is the meaning of a vocation ?
 1. It comes out of our eternal predestination.
 2. It is a special call from God.
 3. And a dedication to a special work.
 4. Yet it often looks only like a natural bias.
 5. It is probably the one shape of our salvation.
- II. What follows from this.
 1. It is a subject of daily reflection.
 2. And of very anxious examen of conscience.
 3. A loss of our liberty, even in our work.
 4. How easily we miss the intent of our vocation.
 5. For the most part it is a grace without recall.
- III. Our own vocation
 1. To be images of St. Philip.
 2. To be men of prayer.
 3. To save souls.
 4. To sanctify ourselves by
 1. Humility.
 2. Charity.
 3. Weariness.
 4. Sweetness.

5. Manifold obedience.
5. Hidden riches of our vocation.
 1. Nature sapped by grace.
 2. Hiddenness of it.
 3. It is the invention of Mary.
 4. What dying Oratorians have said.

2.

HABITS OF PRAYER.

- I. The importance of prayer.
 1. It is the chief thing in the spiritual life.
 2. Without it all other things are useless.
 3. It is extremely difficult to acquire.
 4. And extremely easy to lose.
 5. No man belongs to himself, or to God, until he has brought himself under the control of habits of prayer.
- II. The conditions of sanctifying mental prayer.
 1. The continuity of it.
 2. The length of time spent upon it.
 3. Patience in enduring dryness.
 4. Its connection with our spiritual state.
 5. Making its success the subject of our vocal prayer.
- III. The privileges of mental prayer.
 1. It saturates us with the presence of God.
 2. It keeps us in a supernatural atmosphere.
 3. It communicates an awful intimate knowledge of God.
 4. It grounds us in a deep and heavenly peace.
 5. It gives us perpetual joy.

IV. The difficulties of mental prayer.

1. Extreme tediousness.
2. Even a preternatural disgust.
3. Slowness of progress.
4. Invisibility of results.
5. Variety of peculiar temptations against
 1. Faith.
 2. Chastity.
 3. Of censoriousness.
 4. Against temper.
 5. And obedience.

V. The place of mental prayer in our Vocation.

1. The *res unica*—we are Oratorians.
2. Sovereign over all other things.
3. Our success in our work depends upon it.
4. So does our sweet subjection in community.
5. Union of it with spirit of study.
6. Poor prospect of perseverance without it.
7. Noviciate the time to learn it: we shall not be likely to learn it afterwards.

3.

THE NECESSITY OF MORTIFICATIONS.

I. Mortification necessary to holiness.

1. Considered as an absolute precept.
2. As a necessary condition of the observance of the Evangelical Counsels.
3. We are committed to it, as being committed to the pursuit of perfection.
4. Past and forgiven sins render it necessary.
5. So also do the temptations which beset us.

II. Privileges of mortification.

1. Without it habits of prayer are not attainable.
2. Without it sweetness in community is impossible.
3. Without it our spiritual life is a series of delusions.
4. Nothing so advances us in humility, because it shows us our cowardice and meanness.
5. There is nothing like it to give us power with God as apostles.

III. The importance of exterior mortification.

1. No one has ever been known to sanctify himself without it.
2. Habits of interior mortification cannot be acquired without the practice of exterior.
3. The best for us are those which we can practise in secret, and may be discomforts and poverties rather than austerities.
4. Of regular austerities we ought to have at least one, which is habitual to us.
5. It should be with the permission of Superior or confessor, which permission is not necessary for the discomforts and poverties.

IV. Interior mortification.

1. This must be incessant.
2. In our tongues.
3. In our judgments.
4. In our tempers.
5. In our selfish cravings for sympathy.

V. Mortification in the Oratory.

1. It was the character of St. Philip and the first Fathers.
2. The practice of poverty was a remarkable characteristic of them.
3. So also was their saying their office on their knees.
4. Interior mortification is quite the badge of the Congregation.
5. Needfulness of it to keep safe our liberty of spirit, and make it a real freedom of soul, by being a jubilant dependence upon God.

4.

READING THE LIVES OF THE SAINTS.

- I. The importance of an inward atmosphere in the spiritual life.
 1. It guards us against the spirit of worldliness.
 2. It is the security of our prayer.
 3. It facilitates the practice of the presence of God.
 4. It hinders sins by preventing our being taken by surprise.
 5. It makes our whole spiritual life a consistent unity.
- II. Spiritual reading.
 1. A chief means of creating this inward atmosphere.
 2. Its relation to prayer, as oil to the lamp.
 3. Its relation to examen of conscience, as increasing our knowledge of the requirements of holiness.

4. Its relation to the use of time, as filling up our leisure.
5. As being a spiritual exercise, which can be practised even when we are in a state of fatigue.

III. Reading the Lives of the Saints.

1. It keeps us from getting modernized in tone.
2. It is next door to living in a Catholic country.
3. It keeps our faith fresh, and helps us to increase our faith, which should be one of our chief aims.
4. The Holy Ghost is constantly whispering His inspirations in this kind of reading.
5. It has a peculiar faculty of inflaming the heart with divine love.

IV. How to read the Lives of the Saints.

1. It must not be the only book—some one more scientific and direct must have a set time in the day.
2. We can read *pausatim*, and so half meditate.
3. We can read a lot at once, and so colour our minds by it.
4. It must be connected with direct devotion to the Saints in question.
5. After finishing, collect some one thing for imitation, and make notes in a manuscript book.

V. This reading is suitable to the genius of the Oratory.

1. It entered into the Founder's primary idea.
2. It enriches preaching.

3. It is a great help in the spiritual direction of others.
4. It is congenial to the spirit of simplicity which belongs to the Congregation.
5. It is a constant reinforcement of supernatural principles, which, as we shall see in Instruction 6, are especially wanted in the Oratory.

5.

THE SPIRIT OF SERIOUSNESS.

- I. A difficulty in the Oratory ; because of
 1. Lightness of heart.
 2. Peculiar nature of the obedience.
 3. Small amount of Rule.
 4. Spirit of concealment—*celare lo spirito*.
 5. Sunniness to others.
- II. St. Philip's warning.
 1. He warns us especially against buffoonery.
 2. Weariness of it in the long run to hard-working men.
 3. Absence of repose in it.
 4. Thus it is fatal to apostolic success.
 5. And corrodes all our own interior spirit.
- III. The spirit of seriousness.
 1. Without it the presence of God is dissipated.
 2. The habit of reverence becomes impaired.
 3. Examen of conscience is neglected : I consider this one of the characteristic perils of the Oratory.
 4. It is one of our defences against rapid frothy overtalking.

5. The want of it leads to positive sins.

IV. The need of it in community life.

1. Because without it there is no considerateness.

2. And without considerateness the obedience to superiors, and the outward respect due to them are continually overlooked.

3. Also without considerateness, charity, self-denying charity to others is constantly being infringed.

4. Opportunities of meriting are continually overlooked.

5. Without it there is no beautifulness in our observance, so as to win others to the same observance.

V. Necessity of it in the Oratory.

1. It is the substitute for Rule.

2. It just meets the dangers of the Institute: and fosters its spirit of tranquil pathos.

3. It brings with it gentleness and sweetness: levity and love never reside in the same heart.

4. It enables us to have leisure, and to go calmly through our crowded work: it is rest in labour, and there is no other.

5. It makes our demeanour preach to others.

VI. The privileges of the spirit of seriousness.

1. It is the persuasive beauty of holiness.

2. It is the behaviour of Angels.

3. It is the condensed spirit of prayer.

4. It is the dignity of the saints.

5. It is the participation in the eternal peace of God.

6.

SUMMARY OF THE PECULIARITIES AND DIFFICULTIES OF THE ORATORIAN LIFE.

I. Incessant snub to nature : though not to individual character.

1. No excitement : even in spirituals.
2. Sameness of place and work.
3. Incessancy of occupation.
4. Unostentatiousness of the kind of work : and thanklessness both within the house and without.
5. Monotony of rule, without æsthetics.

II. Solitude and silence.

1. St. Philip took the hermit feature of our own rooms.
2. Keeping our own rooms almost a condition of our perseverance.
3. Unless we practise silence we grow weak in our work, and languid in our spirituals.
4. Yet with our work our life of prayer is impossible without this solitude and silence.
5. In many other ways it is influential in our vocation, and hinders the *nimia effusio ad externa* from swamping community feeling.

III. Austerity.

1. What has been observed of the portraits of Oratorians.

2. The characteristic practice of poverty.
3. The bodily mortifications, as if the absence of a rule about them gave a liberty to use them.
4. Peculiar spirit of detachment, especially from relatives.
5. Inward mortifications, and singular dependency of obedience.

IV. Sweetness.

1. Continual legislation for others in the Community.
2. Unbroken sweet patience with weary externs.
3. Daily trials of temper.
4. Demeanour in offices and towards officials.
5. Alacrity—alacrity under snubs—also cheerfulness.

V. Industry.

1. Multiplicity and endlessness of occupations.
2. Increasing the longer we remain in the Congregation.
3. Seemingly unmotherly insatiableness of the Congregation in this respect.
4. Peculiar jealousy of the value of time.
5. Disorder of unpunctuality and want of promptitude, which unfits a man for every department of the Institute.

VI. Perseverance.

1. St. Philip made all depend on this.
2. Absence of vows heightens this.
3. External work interrupted, and scandal given by absence of it.
4. Even in the house the Institute adopts and works up into itself a Father's ways, and if he

does not persevere in his own good ways, all suffer.

5. What Blessed Sebastian said of *mobilità*, as the special temptation of Oratorians: this I take to be the grand trial of triennial Fathers.

VII. The antique spirit.

1. Gravity of theological doctrine.
 2. Uncommunicativeness to externs.
 3. Unworldly ways and decorums.
 4. Unsympathy with the world: e. g. hatred of heresy, and dead set against worldliness.
 5. A sort of Roman sternness, as living among catacombs of martyrs, and among the associations of the primitive Church.
-

MEDITATIONS.

1.

THE PARTICULAR JUDGMENT.

I. The end of time.

1. Last moment of meriting.
2. Last moment of Sacraments and grace.
3. The past irrevocable.
4. An uncertain interior act is to bear all the weight of that irrevocable past.
5. Parting company with everything we have been accustomed to.

II. The judgment.

1. The sight of Jesus.
2. The presence of the evil one.
3. The place of the judgment and the time it takes.
4. The keen illumination of the mind, with all intricate life flashed upon it.
5. The sentence.

III. The first minutes of eternity.

1. The sentence lingering in the ear.
2. All around is fixed, irrevocable, still.
3. Trying to realise the sentence.
4. Beginning to move.
5. Whither ?

2.**OUR PRESENT STATE BEFORE GOD.****I. Importance of it.**

1. Because we may die in it.
2. Because it is the result of so many divine operations.
3. It is our correspondence to years of graces.
4. It is a prophecy of our future ;
5. Unless we make most determinate efforts that it shall not be so.

II. What is our present state ?

1. In the matter of prayer.
2. In the matter of mortification.
3. In the matter of fidelity.
4. In reverence for the Sacraments.

5. Is it mending or worsening?

III. Provision for the future

1. By intense sorrow for the present.
2. By deepening our sense of our own nothingness.
3. By learning more complete dependence upon God.
4. By heightening our courage and trust, from the thought of past mercies and graces.
5. By making minute and *particular* resolutions about all the things in the second point—and putting them under short vows if it seems advisable.

3.

THE USE OF TIME.

I. The practical meaning of time.

1. Each moment is capacious enough to hold the merits of an eternal life.
2. However idle we are, each moment is filled with outward or inward acts.
3. To the individual none of these acts are indifferent.
4. Our eternity depends upon our time.
5. And there is something very appalling in the swift onflowing of it, and its unintermitting flow.

II. The character of time.

1. It is irrevocable.
2. It tends to become invisible to an unexamined conscience.

3. It cannot be realised without an effort.
4. It is perpetually bearing witness before the Throne.
5. It is a talent, and so full of grace that it is almost a grace itself.

III. Thoughts.

1. The immense quantity we have already wasted.
2. The two points of view from which we have plenty of time, and hardly enough time.
3. The vows of St. Andrew Avellino and St. Alphonso.
4. The moments of Jesus and Mary.
5. Particular resolutions about this matter, which we ought to write down.

4.

THE JEALOUSY OF GRACE.

I. The value of grace.

1. One degree of sanctifying grace above all possible worlds.
2. One vaguest transient impulse of actual grace above all worlds also.
3. The price of grace was the Precious Blood, or the merits of Christ.
4. Grace makes glory, in precise measures.
5. One degree of grace lost is an eternal loss.

II. Wonders.

1. The magnificence of grace.
2. The abundance of grace.
3. The variety of grace.

4. The concentrated power of each grace, to convert or make a saint by itself.
5. The wonder that reasonable men should pay attention to anything but grace.

III. The jealousy of grace.

1. Often the same grace never returns twice.
2. Often grace will not wait a moment.
3. This is the case especially with those who are called to perfection.
4. Often one rejected grace will produce days of inexplicable interior unhappiness.
5. Salvation even sometimes, but often huge interests may turn on one grace, which yet has no look of being anything more than one of the crowd of ordinary graces.

5.

THE PEACE OF GOD.

I. Our own instability.

1. This, rightly considered, is our chief hindrance to holiness.
2. The little things on which our dispositions depend, health, sunshine, a word, a look, a fancy.
3. One instability is a fertile source of venial sins.
4. And disperses in a moment painfully acquired graces.
5. Its immediate result to ourselves is weakness against evil, disgust for good, and interior unhappiness.

II. The Vision of God's Peace.

1. He is immense, yet nowhere hastened or quickened.
2. Possessed with a most silently burning love.
3. Yet the world, and hell, and lost souls only deepen the peace.
4. Time passes by and hardly ripples against its shore.
5. It never began—and will never end.

III. That peace is our home.

1. We are to dwell in the midst of it for ever.
2. There will be no vicissitudes or excitement in it to us then.
3. We must begin that peace here.
4. Means—intense, immediate devotion to the Divine Perfections.
5. Devotion to the angels, who are always in heaven, even while with us—and especially to St. Raphael.
6. This peace was the queen-grace of our dearest Mother.
7. The grand road to this peace is the desire of God, which colours, sweetens, ripens, matures the soul, with a sort of specialty of its own.

6.**THE MAJESTY OF GOD.****I. The Divine Perfections.**

1. Their independence of us.
2. Their boundless power.

3. The infinitude of their beauty.
4. Their insatiable thirst for our love.
5. Their terribly glorious sanctity.

II. Their Relation to us.

1. They long for our companionship.
2. They make themselves little to us.
3. Yet they are exacting and jealous.
4. We must climb arduous heights to reach them.
5. Yet shall they lighten for ever, and we not be there to see?

III. What comes of God's Majesty.

1. We must worship in fear.
2. And to our fear we must add amazement.
3. Our service must be most minute.
4. It must also be unlimited.
5. We must take no sort of liberties, not even in a posture at prayer.
6. Mary's beautiful panic in heaven at this moment.
7. The magnificent holy fear which is beating like pulses in the Flesh and Blood of the Sacred Humanity at this hour, and will be eternally.

This, and this only is LOVE OF GOD!

RECOMMENDATION OF THE RETREAT.

To keep a diary, very brief, with perhaps often only two or three words for each day, sometimes more, as the case may be. You can let me see the diary from time to time. There should be no rhetoric in it. It should be a mere spiritual log book, with latitudes, longitudes, soundings, and number of knots. You will thus get a habit of discerning the activity, subtlety, and incessancy of the operations of the Holy Ghost within your soul, and you will, I am sure, be very much surprised at the revelations of God's character, which a few months of this diary will make to you. On your monthly day's retreat you should read it over, from the last month. It will give you great knowledge of yourself, make your examens of conscience much more real, be a constant food for prayer, lead you deeper into the inside of the Sacraments, and establish you in that, which of all things I most desire—a habit of holy Fear !
Amen.

F. W. F.

Juvenum Præfectus.

Feb. 9, 1858.

II.

MICHAELMAS.

1.

“EXCEPT A MAN TAKE UP HIS CROSS DAILY.”

1. He cannot be my disciple.
2. Follow Him by taking up the Cross.
3. And taking it daily.

Not a counsel of Perfection, but a rule of Salvation.

2.

“THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN SUFFERETH VIOLENCE.”

1. The Kingdom of Heaven.
 1. Its rest, its love, peace—extreme desirableness.
 2. Its sinlessness and worship.
 3. Its pure enjoyment of God.
2. The violent take it by force.
 1. It *must* be gained.
 2. But it can only be gained by force.
 3. And not by mild efforts, but by violent means.
3. Now what is our state ?
 1. Are we putting it before ourselves as our one object ?
 2. Are we doing any manner of violence to ourselves ?

3. Do we take advice and direction in what we *do* ?

3.

“EXCEPT YOU BECOME AS LITTLE CHILDREN.”

1. In what way like little children ?
 1. Simple and artless.
 2. Dependent.
 3. Loving.
 4. Familiar.
2. Are we so ?—or how are we ?
 1. In our obedience ?
 2. In our fraternal charity ?
 3. Towards God ?
3. How can we become so—by what change ?

4.

ALL ELSE IN COMPARISON OF JESUS CHRIST.

1. Those who began with Jesus. Vocation of St. Matthew.
2. Those who had been with Him. “To whom, Lord, shall we go ? Thou hast the words of Eternal Life.”
3. Ourselves.
 1. All else in comparison of Jesus.
 2. Loving shame at the past.
 3. He shall have our whole hearts for the time to come.

5.

GREATNESS OF PAST SIN.

The dethroning of God. Horror of mortal sin.

1. The number of our sins.

Days, weeks, months, years, relapses.

2. The weight of them.

Many mortal—against commandments.

3. The peculiar shame of them.

Circumstances—graces and inspirations—
scandal—corruption of others—irreverence.

More than the hairs of my head, &c. *Amplius
lava me.*

6.

OUR OWN VIEW OF OUR PAST SINS.

Saints fainting at others' sins. Ours are

1. Very bad.

2. Worse than those of any body else.

3. Growing worse—our view is not bad enough
—we see it will grow.

Yet what was the end of our creation ?

7.

GOD'S VIEW OF THEM.

All life has God's eye upon it everlastingly. We are only what we are to Him. We are to Angels, Saints, and Madonna, what we are to Him.

No one else knows us. Neither do we know ourselves.

1. God knows our sins.

More in number.

Deeper in malice.

And all the number and malice before Him at once.

2. His view is far worse than ours, yet it is not only the true, but the merciful view, and the only thing we are concerned with, because He will judge us by it.

3. How it has brought before Him His Son's Passion—and the outrage of His own attributes—the real view of our own sins would be a positive revelation to us.

Does He still love us? at this moment?

Even thus? Oh, what a Faith!

8.

FUTURE JUDGMENT AND PUNISHMENT OF THEM.

1. Fear of forgiven sin; because of

1. Temporal punishment due.

2. Forfeited graces.

3. Relics and habits left.

2. Judgment minute, and punishment terrific—in life—illness, drynesses, failures, unhappiness—the punishment of Purgatory—

1. Fire of hell.

2. Revelations concerning it.

3. Its immense length.

3. We don't know if we deserve love or hatred.

Uncertainty of salvation—what follows ?

1. Constant thought of our sins.
2. Constant sorrow for our sins.
3. Constant humblest cry for mercy.

9.

WONDER AT PRESENT MERCY.

1. Its wonder.

1. How can it *be* ?
2. God rich in mercy.
3. Such a surprise.

2. Its sweetness.

1. All life nothing to it.
2. It continues our sweetness.
3. Devours all other sweetnesses.

3. Its confidence.

1. How are we to lean on God ?
 2. How we can never doubt !
 3. *Rest*, almost like heaven.
- An answer to all questions—God.
A solving of all difficulties—God.
An end of all wanderings—God.

10.

LITTLENESS OF PAST PENANCE.

Look over the wide region of hell, and the slow epochs of purgatory due to you.

1. What amount of penance have you ever done,

or are you doing now? nay, what efforts are you making to do penance?

2. Go into detail.

In bodily pain?

In patient endurance?

In interior mortification?

In tiny comforts?

Nay, even in daily works and studies of our station, and of obedience?

3. Is your present amount of penance safe? are you not risking

The grace of perseverance?

Graces on deathbed?

Temporal punishments which will make you fall?

Want of blessing on your work.

Uncertainty of your vocation.

Don't you suppose many are now in hell, who have done more penance than you?

11.

LITTLENESS OF IMPROVEMENT.

Immense amount a man may do with himself, by the help of God's grace.

1. On conversion, what is wanted?

1. Old habits of sin rooted out.

2. Also external faults,

3. Inward vices,

4. Natural propensions,

5. And sinful imperfections.

2. How much

1. Has been done?
2. Has been tried to be done?
3. What means have been used?
4. How far have they been persevered in?
5. What importance has been attached to the work?

3. Result. Has not the neglect

1. Most likely angered God?
2. Led us to despise many graces and inspirations?
3. Forfeited important grace which would have otherwise come?
4. Rendered the future more difficult?
5. Diminished God's, Mary's, Angels', Saints' love of you?

God's value of least improvements.

12.**LITTLENESS OF PRAYER.**

God's mysterious love of prayer.

1. Importance of it.

1. Words of Scripture.
2. Examples of saints.
3. It is one of the grand means of salvation.
4. Duty of Ecclesiastics.
5. Especially in the Oratory.

2. Attractions of it.

1. Its immense power.
2. Its sweetness often.
3. Its safety.

- 4. Its light.
- 5. Its rest, blessing, and reward.
- 3. Facts as to
 - 1. Care taken.
 - 2. Reverence used.
 - 3. Time spent.
 - 4. Perseverance.
 - 5. Importance attached to it.

Intense sorrow of Jesus at seeing your little prayer on His cross.

13.

MEANNESSES OF CHARACTER.

I have read in novels of more wicked characters than my own, of meaner ones never.

- 1. What they consist in.
 - 1. Insincerities.
 - 2. Selfishnesses.
 - 3. Conceitednesses and little arrogances and pomposities.
 - 4. Shabbinesses.
 - 5. Cowardices.
- 2. Their amount.
 - 1. How common—more the rule than the exception.
 - 2. Would become more frequent, but from fear of detection.
 - 3. In our secret thoughts we are still meaner.
 - 4. Our own disgust of self, when we think of it all.

3. What they do for us.

1. They are *not* secret, but to self, and we know least of them.
2. God sees all, and how they hinder graces.
3. Superiors see all, and shrink from trying to do you good for fear of worse things.
4. Your brothers see it, appreciate it all, more than you think.

Upon all this character, sanctity is to be built.

14.

WONDER AT GOD'S PATIENCE.

The Spanish lady mentioned by Lanciaus.

1. The patience of Jesus in His Passion, one of its most touching wonders.
2. Yet the patience of God is still more wonderful.
 1. With the world.
 2. With sinners.
 3. With His own children.
3. Singular wonder of His patience to us.
 1. Somehow a greater wonder than His mercy.
 2. So patient with us *after* His mercy.
 3. Had He ever to practise patience so much with any one as with us?

Ask Him for the gift of tears—use Collects out of the Missal.

15.

WONDER AT THE PATIENCE AND FORBEARANCE OF
OUR BROTHERS WITH US.

We can see in our own selves no one thing really worthy of love.

1. Our real treatment.

1. Hatred—yet how deserving we are of it.

2. Unkindnesses—none—few—small and transient.

3. Kindnesses—how many—real—constant.

2. Our treatment of others.

1. Have we done as much for them as they for us ?

2. Commission.

3. Omission.

3. The wonder—

1. That, being what we are, we are so loved.

2. Now this thought will be new, fresh, strong to us.

3. How we will love our Brothers now, as Christ loves them !

Ah ! let this be the grace we will ask now, at the end of this meditation—that all things may be new—that all our life may put on a new aspect—that we may be new men in Christ Jesus.

Tonight read the first Epistle of St. John, instead of the Sermon on the Mount.

16.

THE FUTURE—WHAT IS IT TO BE LIKE ?

Compos. of place.—The Particular Judgment.

1. Recapitulation

1. Of your sins.

2. Of your want of correspondence since your conversion.

3. Of God's huge love.

2. He gives you now a future.

1. He is ready with grace.

2. The great advantages your vocation gives you.

3. It is a cheerful prospect.

3. What then is it to be like ?

1. Quite different from the past—supernatural.

2. All for God.

3. In what points particularly.

Philippians, iii. 13, 14.

17.

THE THREE THINGS REQUIRED.

1. Great courage.

1. Because of its necessity.

2. Because it wins God so.

3. Because it is the sole atmosphere of love.

2. Great humility.

1. Because it alone is safe.

2. It so corresponds to all graces, and so wins such immensity of grace.
3. Because it alone is light, rest, happiness.
3. Great obedience.
 1. It supernaturalises all.
 2. It gives unity.
 3. It meets all temptations at once, and cures all sickness of the soul, like a specific.

This, I believe, is what St. Philip would say to us all. Now ask St. Michael to get these things for you, that you may solidly and fervently help the Church, whose Angel he is.

18.

THE GREATNESS AND CERTAINTY OF GRACE.

Sanctifying grace—a communication of the Divine Nature. Actual grace—an impulse of the Divine Will.

1. The sweetness of grace.
 1. Its timeliness.
 2. Its affectionateness.
 3. Its frequent sensible sweetness.
2. The greatness of it.
 1. What great graces we have had, and they will grow greater.
 2. One grace would make a Saint.
 3. Its incessancy.
3. The certainty of it.
 1. As of faith in our dear Lord's Divinity.
 2. More than we expected.

3. And just what we want, or more.
Mary, the channel of grace.

19.

PERSONAL LOVE OF JESUS CHRIST.

St. Michael's first sight of God.

1. Intense devotion to Jesus Christ the Eternal Word.

1. Of admiration.

2. Of faith.

3. Of jubilee.

2. To the Sacred Humanity.

1. Of adoration.

2. Of thanksgiving.

3. Of tenderness.

3. To Jesus, God and Man.

1. Lifelong.

2. Without reserve or exception.

3. Not sovereign only, but exclusive.

St. Michael's devotion to the Word, His cry, *Quis ut Deus?* Oh, that it might ring in our ears all life long, and as we die,—as it will be the jubilant wonder, the adoring outburst of our eternity.

CONSIDERATIONS.

1.

DELUSIONS AND EXAMEN OF CONSCIENCE.

The greatest discouragement in the spiritual life is caused by delusions.

1. Their number.
2. Their facility.
3. Their hiddenness.
4. Their connection with the ruling passion.
5. Their correction. How to hinder them.
 1. Universal self-distrust.
 2. A life of prayer, which is a life of light.
 3. A life of fraternal charity, which leads us out of self-inspection.
 4. Habits of examination of conscience—particular examen.
 5. Oratorian obedience, because it involves mortification of the *razionale*.

2.

HUMILITY.

The virtue which is the foundation of prayer.

The virtue without which all other virtues are useless and untrue.

1. The humiliations of the Eternal Word—our meditation as priests.

2. Our own defects.
 1. The little we think of our sins.
 2. Wounded feelings.
 3. Self-defence.
 4. Sticking up for rights.
 5. Complacence in works.
3. Means of getting it.
 1. Presence of God, and meditation on His attributes.
 2. Constant remembrance of the humiliations of the Eternal Word.
 3. Comparing ourselves with St. Philip.
 4. Thought of our past sins.
 5. And present infidelity to grace.
4. Practices of it in the Congregation.
 1. Obedience.
 2. Conduct to subordinate Superiors and Officials.
 3. St. Antony's habit of admiring some one thing in each.
 4. Listening more than talking.
 5. Trying to value tiny slights, and inconsideratenesses.

3.

FRATERNAL CHARITY MUST DEPEND ON ESTEEM.

1. Charity one of the bases of the Congregation.
 1. Impossibility of sanctifying yourself, if out of charity with even one member.

2. Likewise, if out of harmony with the Congregation.
3. Tendency to clique, and ruin of a Community thereby.
4. Equal result of having favourites: the two Cardinals at recreation.
5. The incapability of filling an office, if not in charity with all.
2. Community charity rests upon return.
 1. Not like blood ties.
 2. Nor friendship, which is ruin.
 3. Common end, common Saint, and common Rule.
 4. It rests upon return.
 5. And upon mutual admiration.
3. Hence, what must we do?
 1. Frequent reunion.
 2. Frequent those who will, we feel, make us love God more.
 3. Pick out, and imitate the virtues of each.
 4. Govern temper.
 5. Govern tongue.

But above all a sovereign, nay, if it might be, an exclusive love of God.

4.

FRATERNAL CHARITY.

This is above all grand works for souls—to love the brethren. See how these Christians love one another.

Moreover, the amount of our fraternal charity is the measure of the amount of love to God. See St. John's first Epistle.

Measures of love.

1. As we wish they should love us.
2. As God loves them.
3. As God loves us.

Chief practices.

1. To take turns and work for them—*alter alterius onera portate.*
2. Never to criticise them.
3. Nor to judge them.

St. Philip's and St. Teresa's beginnings.

Difficulties.

1. If you are fidgeted by their peculiarities, they are equally fidgeted by yours.
2. Because they are more popular than you—humility would teach you they deserved it.
3. Superiors use and repose confidence; they know best: here obedience will help you as well as humility.
4. Besides you have exaggerated it all by talking, or by judging in thought.
5. Moreover, if all this be true, the love of you by others is as true, and the love of our Blessed Lord is with you.

5.

GOVERNMENT OF THE TONGUE.

Few things are more surprising in Scripture than the stress laid upon it.

Few things more unlike God than loquacity.

1. Evils of it.

1. Facility of sinning.
2. Multitude of sins.
3. Variety of them.
4. Lastingness of them.
5. Forgetfulness of them.

2. In Community.

1. Against obedience.
2. Against humility.
3. Against charity.
4. Against spiritual exercises.
5. Against use of time.

3. St. Philip.

1. Cell and silence the one monastic characteristic of his Rule.
2. How unauthorised recreations alter the whole Oratorian Life.
3. Somehow the utter helplessness Superiors find in a loquacious subject,—worse than *falls into sin*.
4. How the extreme *purity* of the religious life is offended by it.
5. How the secrets of externs and the seal are perilled, and mischief bred in Community.

4. Means.

1. Special prayer.
2. Particular examen.
3. Avoid writing letters.
4. Never read papers.
5. But chiefly KEEP ROOM.

6.

INTERIOR SPIRIT OF OBSERVANCE.

Hidden treasures in the Congregation, which the dying Father spoke about.

1. What it is to be interior.

1. To live in the presence of God.
2. To seek God within us rather than without.
3. To strive to make our intentions for Him *actual*.
4. To desire to do all things for one reason, and that not so much His glory as His Will.
5. When not thwarting natural inclination, to add a supernatural intention to the natural one.

2. Interior observance of the Rule.

1. To unite all our observances with the rule of Jesus.
2. To make our charity, not kindness or blitheness, but seeing Jesus in our Brothers.
3. To obey, as seeing God in superiors.
4. To work, as for God, on supernatural grounds.
5. To observe in the spirit of the priesthood.

3. Means.

1. In bores never to look at secondary causes.

2. Never to talk of preaching turns, &c., as bores.
3. Special prayer for this grace.
4. To cultivate a great devotion to St. Philip.
5. To avoid all criticism of others.

Humility is at once the spring and the protection of this most excellent grace.

7.

COURAGE.

What St. Teresa said.

1. Necessity of courage.
 1. Because the work is not easy.
 2. Because of the drag of perseverance.
 3. Because of our own weakness and disabilities.
 4. Because of the constant thwarting of the natural.
 5. Because of discouragement.
2. Means to acquire it.
 1. Frequent renewal of our resolutions.
 2. Immense esteem of grace, gained by frequent reflection on it.
 3. Profound humility and distrust of self.
 4. Huge confidence in God gained by meditation on His attributes.
 5. Continual reading of the lives of the saints.

Every one sympathises with the courageous, loves him, helps him, especially in Community.

8.

NECESSITY OF FOR EVER BEGINNING ANEW.

How best to secure what we have got ? how best to persevere ? Here is the difficulty.

To begin afresh continually.

1. It was David's plan and St. Paul's.
2. St. Antony of the Desert.
3. It takes off the weariness of perseverance.
4. It leads us out of ourselves to look to God.
5. It hinders the past from becoming a burden.
6. It gives a freshness to our spiritual life.
7. Grace seems always to be making itself, God, and Jesus *new*, and so seems to lead to this practice.
8. It makes all life a series of fresh fervours.
9. It hinders vain-glory.
10. It helps to keep off torpidity and lukewarmness.
11. It keeps us humble and childlike.
12. It is the truth, and prospers, and wins us victories.
13. It is the natural impulse of courage.
14. Also the natural instinct of love.
15. It adds vigour and fire to our Mass and Communion.
16. It hinders worldly attachments.
17. And even spiritual leanings on habits and things.
18. It keeps us in the present moment which alone is our eternity on earth—the present ! this is the saving time !

PART THIRD.
THE LAY BROTHERS.

I.

BROTHER STANISLAS.*

Affectingness of the first death in a religious house—why men collect in such houses—how they feel towards each other—no carnal tie—like Angels' love—the first death has come like a cruel robbery, or the sacrilege of a broken cloister.

Speak of Brother Stanislas—by what steps he rose up to the height of his holy death.

1. Sacrifice of family for the faith.
2. Of personal liberty for religious obedience.
3. Of youth and the flush of strength for early sickness.
4. Of health and joy for suffering and sorrow.
5. Sacrifice of life to the Will of God.

It was all along a giving up of self and what was dear to self and sweet to self; yet God gave him back his first Catholic home.

Characteristics of his life.

1. Intense horror of anything on his conscience, and fear of offending God.
2. Fervent childlike love of our Blessed Lady.
3. Profound loving reverence for the Blessed Sacrament; e. g. when changing the veils.

Claims on your love and prayers—he was a teacher, the first teacher of our little band before

* Died May 21, 1848.

any of us began; he first taught the Hail Mary here, and so he has gone first to his reward.

Time of his death—our triumph—St. Wilfrid's Community is now partly in heaven.

Account of his last few weeks, and agony on Sunday, May 21, 1848.

Change of the soul—his smile—Jesus coming to judge him, and yet he could smile upon his Judge. Yes, my dear and sainted Brother Stanislas, why didst thou smile? whilst I, the first priest of the Community, could only wait for the strings of thy tender life to be cut—thou wert more to them by thy prayers than I by my poor presence and toils; thou, O sweetly fit—who didst first teach the little ones of Christ here the sweetest of all sweet lessons, hast now taught thy Fathers and Brothers the gravest of all grave lessons, how to die, to die in faith, in patience, in meekest love. Dear sainted Brother! may we die like thee!

II.

RETREAT BEFORE THE ASSUMPTION.

1.

OBJECT OF THE RETREAT.

Composition of place.—That God gave us to see our Guardian Angel, and to speak with him both of the past and the future.

Point 1.—To ask ourselves why we are in Retreat,

what fruit we hope to gain from it, and what diligence even to weariness we ought to use in its exercises; a retreat is not a thing which is over when it is done—it ought to alter, it does alter, one way if not another, the state of our soul before God; it helps us to steal a march on time, and get on heavenwards. Are we resolved to begin and go through this retreat in such dispositions?

Point 2.—Review of the year:—1. Events of the year—2. Graces of the year—3. Our own infidelity to them.

Point 3.—Resolutions:—1. Necessity of making them more seriously than ever—2. Ask for light to see what we had best resolve—3. Resolve in fear, but with a firm purpose; it is God we are dealing with, and this is no child's play. To *us* resolutions must stand in the place of vows.

2.

INSTRUCTION. THE PRESENCE OF GOD.

- I. The presence of God is the atmosphere in which sin cannot live or breathe—e. g. the Blessed in heaven.
- II. It is the atmosphere in which all perfection grows.
- III. Immense importance then of the practice of it.
- IV. Ways of acquiring the habit of this.
 1. Ask it by special prayer.

2. Frequent acts of it—whenever we go in or out of a room, or see a crucifix.
 3. Hear one Mass a week for this intention.
- V. Things to avoid as destructive of it.
1. Loud talking—light talking—much talking.
 2. Slovenly way of hearing Mass, saying Rosary, and other vocal prayers.
 3. Building castles in the air.
 4. Never practising any little mortifications at meal-times.
- VI. Rewards of it.
1. Frequent gushes of love.
 2. Interior peace.
 3. Practice of brotherly charity rendered easy.

3.

ON OUR OWN NOTHINGNESS.

Composition of place.—Almighty God decreeing our creation from nothing.

Point 1.—What we are in the order of nature. 1. Created out of nothing. 2. Inferior to the Angels. 3. Subject to sufferings and indignities. 4. Babyhood and old age. 5. Inferior to animals in corresponding to the end of our creation.

Point 2.—What we are in the order of grace. 1. Necessity of sanctifying grace. 2. Of actual grace. 3. Of grace to cooperate. 4. Admixture of self.

Point 3.—What attitude these reflections ought to

produce in us. 1. Towards God. 2. Towards our neighbours. 3. Towards ourselves. Example of St. Francis Borgia.

4.

ON THE GREATNESS OF GOD.

Composition of place.—The man mentioned in St. Philip's life as retiring backwards when meditating on God.

Point 1.—The excessive beauty of God reflected in the beauty of the Angels. St. Francis of Assisi. His power and knowledge also in their power and knowledge.

Point 2.—His presence everywhere—His awful sanctity—the strictness of His judgments—His patient silence and permission of evil.

Point 3.—His eternity—inconceivableness of having no beginning—consequent independence of all obligations to any one—His adorable Will being all in all.

5.

INSTRUCTION. UNION WITH GOD THE END OF THE SOUL.

- I. Necessity of realising this afresh every day of our lives, and of making formal acts of it.
- II. Happiness of having a childlike temper to believe all the supernatural wonders we read of the Saints, as it helps towards union.
- III. We must habitually look at—1. Venial sin,

2. Unworthy infirmity, and 3. Not answering interior calls, as so many impediments to union.

IV. Detachment from creatures.

1. From the world.
2. From the *home* of a religious house.
3. From a mere natural love of our Brothers.
4. From regular habits.
5. From means of grace.
6. From spiritual sweetnesses.
7. The heroism of an unvowed Oratorian is to aim at detachment from relations and friends, which are the source of untold evils. A man's foes are those of his own household.

6.

ON GOD'S ANXIETY TO GAIN OUR SOULS.

Composition of Place.—The Good Shepherd.

Point 1.—He is never repulsed by the slovenliness and ingratitude of souls.

Point 2.—He pursues us as warmly as if He did not know our future infidelities.

Point 3.—He pursues our one soul with as pure and earnest a fire of love as if His happiness consisted in the possession of it.

Point 4.—There is no time or place when and where He does not carry on this loving pursuit, as if He had no other occupation, no world to govern, &c.: and He stoops to be overjoyed when we give Him a heart already wearied and worn out by creatures.

Keep the greatness of God before you—and how wonderful is all this !

7.

INSTRUCTION—AWFULNESS OF SIN.

1. As blighting your own soul.
2. As incurring eternal punishment, if mortal.
3. As incurring the terrific fires of purgatory, if venial.
4. As a stain which only the Blood of God made Man can wash away.
5. As so detestable before God, that hell and purgatory may not be emptied, nor all heathen lands converted, by one simple falsehood.
6. As an act of base ingratitude.
7. As being in its malice a real attempt to dethrone God.

Ask of God the most intense hatred of venial sin.

8.

ON INFIDELITIES TO GOD IN LITTLE THINGS.

Composition of Place.—Jesus in the Holy House of Nazareth.

- Point 1.*—Our past infidelity in our ordinary actions—run through one of our ordinary days act by act—forgetfulness of Him.
- Point 2.*—Nothing little in His sight—interior calls of the Holy Ghost, and our rude way of

not attending to them at work and meals and recreation—grief of the sweet Spirit.

Point 3.—Ordinary actions of Jesus in the House of Nazareth—fancy one of His days act by act—take Him for model—make resolutions—Mary is the Mother of our Congregation, with the white-haired St. Philip in St. Joseph's place.

9.

THE CRUCIFIXION.

Composition of Place.—Calvary with the crosses lying on the ground—then go through the scene.

Point 1.—The horror of Heaven—God the Father and God the Holy Ghost silent and permissive—Angels—even inanimate things moved.

Point 2.—The broken Heart and superhuman martyrdom of Mary.

Point 3.—Sweetness—charity—generosity of our dearest Jesus. Have you ever committed one mortal sin? Well then—there are its three fruits. What will you resolve now?—Go wipe His bleeding Feet with tears of loving contrition.

10.

INSTRUCTION—EJACULATORY PRAYER AS THE FIRST MEANS OF UNION WITH GOD.

1. As preserving the habit of the presence of God.

2. As inflaming our interior love.
3. As a secret devotion which no one can find out, and so free from temptations to vain-glory.
4. As not interfering with Community actions.
5. But on the contrary sanctifying them.
6. As recommended and practised by all the Saints.
7. As an exercise of Christian simplicity and childlikeness.

11.

THE THREE CONSENTS OF OUR BLESSED LADY.

Composition of Place.—The Blessed Virgin Mary talking to St. Philip in his sick room.

Point 1.—Her first consent—when St. Gabriel saluted her; she then consented to be the Mother of all men, as well as of our Lord.

Point 2.—Her second consent—when Jesus asked her leave to go to His Passion.

Point 3.—Her third consent—at the foot of the Cross, when she had travailed with us in her dolours.

Point 4.—Her vocation of us to her own Congregation: and her call of us now to the heights of perfection.

12.

INSTRUCTION—SANCTIFICATION OF ORDINARY ACTIONS
THE SECOND MEANS OF UNION WITH GOD.

1. As a more continual practice of His presence.
2. As a greater act of faith.
3. As the most pleasing of all sacrifices to Him.
4. As making life an unbroken prayer.
5. As copying Jesus—thirty years of ordinary actions and three of wonders in His Life.
6. As uniting communion with God with outward charity.
7. As having the merit of obedience.
8. As not liable to spiritual delusions.
9. As tending to foster humility.
10. As productive of interior peace and spiritual joy.

Rules for this. Do

1. All actions as your last.
2. All as you would counsel another.
3. All as if man's eye were not on you.
4. All as you would wish at the particular judgment.

13.

HER LIFE IN THE HOUSE OF ST. JOHN A MODEL OF OURS.

Composition of place.—Our Blessed Lady recreating herself by spiritual converse with St. John.

Point 1.—Our model in her continual remembrance of Jesus, making pictures of Him in her mind, speaking of Him, gazing into the depth of what He said or did.

Point 2.—Her hearing mass—her receiving communion—her adoration of the Blessed Sacrament—her making the stations—her meditating the mysteries on which we dwell in the Rosary.

Point 3.—Her delight in copying that devotion to the Will of God which she had seen so manifested in Jesus—her meditations upon death.

14.

LOVING PROSPECT OF DEATH.

Composition of Place.—Our dear Lady fainting away in death through excess of love to the most adorable Trinity.

Point 1.—What do we think of death—how often—in what way—what steps do we take to prepare? Examine ourselves on this.

Point 2.—Bodily pain of it—a penance to the justice of God: let us do all that part of it now, and get it over.

Point 3.—Love of death, and desire for it : yearning to be with God—joy of beginning eternity
 dulness of receding earth—extasy of the first
 freedom of the soul, as borne up to the gates
 of heaven : joy to think that this *may* be any
 hour, and *cannot* be long now. Prayer to
 our dying Lady.

15.

INSTRUCTION—BODILY MORTIFICATIONS THE THIRD
 MEANS OF UNION WITH GOD.

- I. We are speaking of the Assumption of a Body likened to our Lord's through the endurance of suffering.
- II. Fact that *all* the saints, even St. Ignatius and St. Philip, practised great bodily mortifications—uneasiness therefore of not doing it.
- III. Impossibility of arriving at *interior* mortification except through exterior.
- IV. What is our practice in this matter ?
- V. What sort of bodily mortifications are suitable to Oratorians ?
 1. Discipline, if practicable.
 2. Secret self-denials at meals.
 3. Uncomfortable postures in prayer : not mental, but vocal.
- VI. What sort to be avoided ?
 1. Public.
 2. Any connected with bed or sleep.

VII. Duty of manifestation of all this subject-matter to your director.

Make resolutions before going out of Retreat—never speak or joke of mortifications—Oh how much grace is lost by light talk about these things!

16.

HER ASSUMPTION, TAKING OUR HEARTS WITH HER.

Composition of Place.—The act of her Assumption.

Point 1.—Her Throne—her Crown—her Resplendent Beauty.

Point 2.—Exultation of Jesus—joy of Angels—raptures of the Saints.

Point 3.—We offer to her our hearts pledged to detachment to be assumed with her—she accepts them—they cease to be ours—let us make then a loving compact with her, and cease to be our own—make it in our Communion.

Say the *Te Deum* twice a day during the octave in thanksgiving.

III.

FROM RETREAT AT ST. WILFRID'S.

1.

THE TWENTY QUESTIONS.

1. How long is your morning's meditation ?
2. Are you punctual at it, and for the full time ? How often in the week do you miss ?
3. Do you examine your conscience daily ? How long do you take in doing it ? How do you do it ?
4. Do you make particular examen ? and on what subject ?
5. What subject are your meditations on at present ?
6. How often, and for how long do you visit the Blessed Sacrament daily ?
7. How many Rosaries do you say daily ? Are you tolerably regular ?
8. How many times a week do you go to Communion ?
9. How long do you make thanksgiving ? And how do you make it ?
10. What daily devotions do you pay to St. Philip, your Guardian Angel, and Patron Saint ?
11. Are you in the habit of using ejaculatory prayer during the day ?

12. What fault most besets you ?
13. What virtue are you most aiming at ?
14. What bodily penances do you perform ?
15. What acts of daily interior mortification ?
16. What set means of custody of the senses ?
17. What efforts towards the government of the tongue ?
18. Do you make any meditations but the morning one ?
19. Are you enjoying at present sensible devotion and love of God ?
20. What night prayers do you say ?

2.

PARTICULAR DIFFICULTIES OF ORATORIAN
LAY BROTHERS.

- I. In the little amount of Community life which they have, without the same safeguards as the Fathers have in their duties as priests.
Remedies for this.
 1. Love of prayer.
 2. Jealous use of time.
 3. Attentiveness to little Community acts.
 4. Affectionate devotion to St. Philip.
- II. In the bustle of external things, and working for the souls of others.
Remedies.
 1. To exercise yourselves in calmness.
 2. To get a habit of ejaculatory prayer.
 3. Not to act quickly.

III. In intercourse with Superiors.**Remedies.**

1. To look at all Superiors as though St. Philip himself.
2. To make obedience a safeguard against the carelessness which might come of affectionate familiarity.
3. To try not to fear them, but to love them with reverence, and often to think of and sympathise with their anxieties.

IV. In intercourse with each other.**Remedies.**

1. To respect each other.
2. To make rudeness, boisterousness, or foolish freedoms with each other a subject of particular examen.
3. Never to tell each other of faults.
4. To copy the prominent virtue of each other.
5. To think from the bottom of your heart that you have no virtue for your brothers to copy.

3.**ORATORIAN HUMILITY.**

I. The importance of this virtue to Oratorians,
inasmuch as St. Philip laid the foundations
of the Oratory on humility and charity.

II. Humbling character of the Institute.

1. Not a religious order: no dignities of austerities or vows.
2. The nature of the work is secret and unexciting and monotonous.

3. The work is not work which we *see* : it is a hidden spreading of childlike affectionateness far and wide, even beyond its own circle.
4. The comforts are so many, and the hardships so few, as though God saw we could not bear it otherwise.

III. Our own reasons for being humble.

1. Because God has called us into the Oratory.
2. Because we have corresponded so badly to His grace.
3. Because in our dear Lady's Congregation, how can we be anything but humble?

IV. Ways of humility.

1. Towards God and St. Philip.
2. Towards Superiors.
3. Towards the Fathers.
4. Towards each other.
5. Towards those without, who are rude, or troublesome, or inconsiderate.

V. How to get humility.

1. To make it a subject of special prayer.
2. To make one Communion a week for it.
3. To meditate frequently on the humiliations of Jesus and Mary.
4. Often to visit the Blessed Sacrament to adore that special humiliation.
5. To obey the *wishes* of your equals, which are not commands.
6. To say an Ave of thanksgiving whenever you get a humiliation.
7. To love each other most tenderly, and wonder how others can love you.

4.

MORTIFICATIONS.

Mortification is a characteristic of Oratorian holiness.

I. Exterior mortification.

1. To ill-treat the body.

1. By taking from it what it wants—food, sleep, &c.
2. By afflicting it with hairshirts, scourges, &c.
3. By taming it, by hard work, &c.

2. To bring the senses under.

1. By denying to them everything which may be an occasion of sin.
2. By renouncing everything which gives them pleasure.
3. By looking out for disagreeable things.

II. Interior mortification.

1. By bridling the passions.

1. Desire—2. Joy—3. Anger—4. Natural aversions.

2. By snubbing our natural activity.

1. Sallies of humour—2. Precipitation—3. Curiosity.

3. By regulating the passions of the soul.

1. The memory—2. The understanding—3. The will.

4. By detachment.

1. From occupations—2. From temporal goods—3. From spiritual goods.

III. Recommended especially for Oratorians.

1. Mortification of the tongue, because of St. Philip's love of silence.
2. Mortification of their own opinion, because of the spirit of the Institute.

5. .

QUIETNESS OF MANNER.

- I. Devotion to the Holy Angels has always been a favourite devotion in the Oratory; and one of its chief effects is to produce quietness and composedness of manner. This quietness of manner is intimately connected with the spirit of our Institute.
 1. Because of its being an Institute of prayer.
 2. Because of its sweetness towards those without.
 3. Because of its being based on humility and charity within.
- II. The preciousness of a quiet manner in the spiritual life.
 1. Because of its exceeding angelic beauty in the sight of God.
 2. Because it is a continual exercise of the presence of God.
 3. Because of its edifying winningness in the sight of others.
 4. Because of the interior mortification which it implies.
 5. Because it hinders dissipation and augments the spirit of prayer.

6. Because it renders the exercise of charity so much easier.

7. Because it is the best preparation for death.

III. What to do and what to avoid in order to gain this quietness of manner.

1. Not to speak when an idea suddenly presents itself, nor to dispute when you feel yourself growing in the least warm.

2. To make an act of the presence of God and St. Philip whenever you feel excited.

3. Not to shout after each other, or talk in a loud tone of voice, or laugh loudly and immoderately.

4. To practise custody of the eyes, as far as your work will allow you.

5. To be devout to the Holy Angels.

6. To ask quietness of manner in prayer.

7. To meditate sometimes on the exterior of Jesus.

Just as people feel satisfied with sinners when they get them to confession, and keep them punctual to it, however little they *seem* to amend, so directors feel the whole interior life to be safe, where there is quietness of manner.

6.

DEVOTION TO ST. PHILIP.

I. Grounds for such a devotion.

1. As to one of God's greatest saints.

2. To one especially fitted for our model in these times and in this land.

3. As to our Founder.
 4. Because of the peculiarity of our Institute, which is to reproduce St. Philip's character perpetually.
- II. Ways of realising him as our Father.**
1. By meditating on his glory in heaven.
 2. By realising him as present in his own Houses on earth.
 3. By treating Superiors as though they were St. Philip.
 4. By looking at our confessor as though he were St. Philip.
- III. Practices of devotion in his honour.**
1. To genuflect before his picture morning and night, and to ask Benedicite of him whenever you leave your room.
 2. To say some set prayers to him daily.
 3. To do kind acts to each other in honour of St. Philip.
 4. To read his life continually.
 5. To tell anecdotes of him to those without, and try to make them love him.
 6. To gain some indulgence daily for the soul in purgatory most devoted to him.
 7. To say three Paters and Aves and Glorias to the Most Holy Trinity, in thanksgiving for the graces and glory bestowed upon him.
 8. To visit Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament for the express purpose of adoring Him for all His goodness to St. Philip.
 9. To say three Glorias in honour of St. Philip's Guardian Angel.

10. To make frequent acts of the presence of St. Philip, as though you heard his voice, or expected to see his face or feel his hand.

7.

HOW TO LOVE EACH OTHER AND TO HELP EACH
OTHER ON.

I. With God.

1. To pray for each other by name daily.
2. To make one communion a week for the Brothers.

II. With Superiors.

1. To carry no complaints.
2. To have always a good word to say for each other.
3. To hide another's neglect by doing yourself what he has neglected.

III. By example.

1. Minute attention and punctuality at Community acts.
2. By frequent prayer.
3. By quietness of manner.

IV. In seasons of recreation.

1. By talking as little as possible of persons.
2. By never laughing at each other's seriousness.
3. By never calling each other saints.
4. By learning to let others have the better of you in argument.
5. By never thinking yourself more recollected than the rest are.

6. By not annoying others by slovenly, lounging postures, and the like.
7. By always trying to take an interest in what others say, as if you knew nothing yourself, and wanted to learn from everybody.

Always look at your Brothers as companions whom God has given you for *eternity*; all are to be translated to heaven together, and you are to find happiness in them even there; so now by charity you are to make them your joy and consolation here.





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